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THE MIDDLE EAST, 1993

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

With a new administration entering office, there is intense speculation over how campaign rhetoric will translate into policy. This is especially true of foreign policy promises. Bill Clinton says he wants to place a new emphasis on promoting democracy. One region where he could begin to make this a reality is the Middle East. Mansour Farhang shows how it could be done and why the naysayers—who have long argued that the Arab world is not ready for democracy—are wrong.

The Clinton administration inherits a Middle East that has grown to include many of the former Soviet republics. While much has been made of Central Asia's relationship with the traditional Middle East, little has been heard about Armenia's and Azerbaijan's ties to the troubled region. William Maggs, who has recently visited both countries, corrects this information deficit with an overview of their evolving relationship with neighboring Turkey and Iran, and the implications for the region and the United States.

The administration is also heir to the Kurd problem. The "safe haven" the United States helped to create for the Kurds in northern Iraq after the bloody suppression of the Kurdish rebellion following the Persian Gulf War has now expanded and become a de facto Kurdish state. The politics and the problems surrounding this development are detailed by Jim Prince.

The issue is rounded out by a survey of the Palestinians by Don Peretz—and Palestinian strategy at the Middle East peace conference. Also covered is Iran's aggressive regional foreign policy by Jerrold Green, Assad's solid control over Syria by Volker Perthes, and an analysis of Labor's return to power by Yitzhak Rabin's political adviser, Gideon Doron. We end with an example of the difficulty of institutionalizing democracy, and the special problems associated with it in the Middle East, in Robert Mortimer's carefully detailed examination of the Algerian elections and the aftermath.

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"However contradictory or limited Washington's support for democratic movements appears to be, the fact remains that the United States is the most powerful promoter of democracy in a number of Asian, African, and Latin American countries, as well as in the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe. In Washington's view it is only the Middle East that is 'not yet ready' for democratization."

The United States and the Question of Democracy in the Middle East

BY MANSOUR FARHANG

In the decades before the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the United States pursued three strategic goals in the Middle East: containment of Soviet influence, maintenance of access to oil at a stable price, and assurance of Israel's security. The means used to protect or advance these priorities were determined by geopolitical and balance of power considerations. Arms sales, covert action, diplomatic support or pressure, trade or trade sanctions, and economic and military assistance were the primary policy instruments.

In the convulsive political environment of the region, the United States was ready to collaborate with any regime that accommodated it. The question of how a regime ruled or treated its own people did not enter the equation. Conversely, any government that exhibited serious resistance to United States expectations was seen as an adversary regardless of its character or motives. This uniform and rigid approach was an anomaly; in every other region of the world at least a rhetorical promotion of democracy was an element of American foreign policy orientation.

During the cold war Washington tended to see pro-Soviet conspirators as the only serious challenge to the traditional regimes in the Middle East. The Iranian

revolution shattered this view and produced the temptation to make Islamic fundamentalism rather than communism the principal threat to Western interests in the region. Yet when Islamic fundamentalists battled Soviet troops in Afghanistan, United States officials did not hesitate to praise them as freedom fighters.

The two other strategic goals—mediating the Arab-Israeli conflict and maintaining the flow of oil from the region—have also been said to explain America's indifference to issues of domestic governance in the Middle East, along with the claim that the preconditions for liberal political reform cannot be found in Islamic societies. Those who subscribe to the first explanation say that the best way to help the cause of order and stability in the region is to facilitate a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. Such an accomplishment, particularly if it could satisfy Palestinian national aspirations, would significantly improve the conditions for peace and well-being in the region, but it is not a panacea for the multifaceted ailments facing Middle Eastern countries.

Fears about an interruption in oil supplies are no less unrealistic. The oil producers are so dependent on their export revenues that they simply cannot maintain viable economies without secure markets for their oil. Issues such as the level of production, conservation, and pricing, as well as the demand for a greater flow of oil money to the economies of the region, are likely to remain contentious for a long time to come. In resolving these disagreements, however, governments that enjoy popular legitimacy would be more reliable

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negotiating partners; and Muslims are certainly capable of forming such governments.

As for the third point, history strongly suggests that the cause of violence and insecurity in the Middle East lies largely in the dictatorial practices that permeate the region's politics. The United States-led coalition that repelled Iraq's aggression against Kuwait signaled, for the first time, international recognition that an ambitious and reckless dictator in a small country can pose a perilous threat to the world. This perspective represented a drastic change in the American and Soviet view of Saddam Hussein because up until the eve of his military adventure both Washington and Moscow assisted him with arms sales, loans, and intelligence information in the expectation of making him an "asset" in their respective geostrategic calculations.

During the Persian Gulf War, President George Bush generated the hope of a new dawn in United States policy toward the Middle East when he repeatedly referred to Saddam as "Baghdad's dictator." Such condemnation had an unsettling sound. The despotic character of the Iraqi leader was known to all, but hearing it from Bush, who until the day of the invasion had viewed him as a person he could work with, was somewhat mystifying. After all, out of the eight Arab states participating in the coalition against Iraq, only Egypt tolerated a degree of political dissent (by Middle Eastern standards). Six—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates—were family or tribal dictatorships; the last was Syria under Hafez Assad, a man not much different from Hussein.

It is now evident that when allied forces expelled Iraqi troops from Kuwait in late February 1991, the Bush administration had to choose between two unattractive options: either to disarm the Baathist machine, force Saddam Hussein into exile, help a coalition of anti-Saddam Iraqis to rescue their country from the inevitable chaos of the postwar political environment and be ready for an uncertain outcome, or keep Hussein in power, leave him enough weapons and troops, tolerate his decimation of the Kurds and the Shiites, watch him restore order, and then try to use him, once again, in the regional balance of power game.

Both alternatives were plagued with uncertainty. President Bush chose the second path because it promised to restore American policy to its prewar status. In this scenario, Bush would have liked to replace Hussein with another strongman, but the nature and organization of the Baathist regime precluded such a possibility. The first choice could have shocked the Persian Gulf dictatorships because it

would have implied that the United States was willing to cope with the unpredictability of popular political competition. It is no wonder, then, that the president embraced the second option and quickly informed his critics that the war "was not about democracy."

Indeed, it soon became evident that Bush's characterization of Hussein as "Baghdad's dictator" was intended more to please the American public than to condemn dictatorship in the Middle East. However one might disagree with the decision to let Hussein reconsolidate his power, it was not too difficult to see the cold logic of the move from the perspective of the Bush administration. What could not be reconciled with minimal standards of fair play was Bush's refusal to support the Iraqi Shiites and Kurds who responded to his personal call, as well as to other United States official encouragement (including the Voice of America), and rose up against their oppressors.

NOT READY FOR DEMOCRACY?

The end of the cold war has not changed the American view on the feasibility of democratization in the Middle East. Washington continues to maintain that nations of the region are not ready or are fundamentally unable to institute democratic rule. Among the rationales offered to justify this contention is the claim that Islam, the dominant political-cultural belief system in the Middle East, is resistant to democratic practices and thus any effort—particularly by outsiders—to break this resistance is likely to be counterproductive. This claim is based more on prejudice or rationalization than on informed observation. An examination of empirical evidence strongly suggests that it is not Islam but the pervasiveness of despotism that hinders democracy's advance in the region.

With the exception of Israel (but not in the occupied territories), all Middle Eastern countries rule in an autocratic fashion. Leaders come to power—often through violence—without the consent of the governed. Lacking popular legitimacy, they use militant rhetoric and appeal to such transnational concepts as pan-Arabism and Islam in an attempt to gain domestic or region-wide support. Unable to rely on the resources and loyalty of their people, they are always looking for scapegoats to explain their policy failures. One way or another, native or foreign enemies are responsible for the shortcomings and broken promises of dictators.

The inherent vulnerability of such rulers is at the root of the militarization of politics in the Middle East. Military expenditures between 1972 and 1988 were 17 percent of GDP in Saudi Arabia, 23.2 percent in Oman, 16.8 percent in Jordan, 14.2 percent in Iran, 16.3 percent in Iraq, 19.6 percent in Israel, 14.3 percent in Syria, and 14.8 percent in Egypt. Since the end of the Persian Gulf War, total United States arms sales to the Arab states amount to \$32.3 billion.¹ The arms race in the region is primarily fed by the acute insecurity of leaders within their own societies. Over the past

¹Military expenditures as a percentage of GDP are from Yahya Sadowski, "Scuds Versus Butter: The Political Economy of Arms Control in the Arab World," *Middle East Report*, July-August 1992, p. 7; total arms transfers to the region are from *Arms Control Today*, September 1992, pp. 36-37.

half-century, not a single Arab head of state has retired or limited his tenure to a fixed term. They either die in office, are assassinated, or are deposed.

It is simply a matter of time before the worldwide democracy movement reaches the gates of the Middle East. Responses to this challenge will differ from nation to nation, and a variety of efforts will be made to adapt local peculiarities to imported models in order to facilitate the growth of civil society and the building of democratic institutions. To guard against disillusionment and fragmentation, proponents of democracy must refrain from romanticizing or exaggerating the fairness and effectiveness of democratic politics. It is important to realize that movement toward democratization may have the best chance of success through a step-by-step process. At each stage both domestic actors and international pressure should focus on pushing the country to the next stage. There is a significant middle class with a modern education and a secular political orientation in every Middle Eastern country. Many members of this class are at the forefront of the struggle for political and economic reform, but they have yet to develop the capacity to build functional alliances with the urban poor or lower-middle classes. At the moment, Islamic fundamentalists represent the best organized challengers of the entrenched ruling elite. Their ability to articulate popular discontent in the form of religious and cultural idioms has a powerful appeal to the populace. In the freely contested parliamentary elections of Jordan and Algeria in 1991 and 1992, the Islamists demonstrated a surprising ability to win majority endorsement. The electoral victory of the Islamists is deeply disturbing to pro-democracy forces, but for the time being they have no choice but to tolerate it as a passing phase in the process of legitimizing and institutionalizing opposition parties and electoral politics.

ISLAM MEETS DEMOCRACY

Since the turn of the century the societies of the Middle East have been steadily influenced by international political and ideological currents. Accordingly, over the past two decades there has been a proliferation of human rights activities in the region. The emergence of vigorous international human rights organizations in the West is a source of encouragement to the native activists who often have to pursue their causes in adverse environments. Scholars and travelers are in agreement that virtually all peoples of the area are exposed to Western culture, science, and technology. There is no confusion or denial about the appeal of things modern to the general population, regardless of how certain sectors of the society might feel about some aspects of Westernization. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the most ascetic leader in recent memory, was fascinated by the way television and cassette players spread his messages. State-of-the-art medical treatment and equipment were available to him around

the clock. The ayatollah also liked modern weapons; a cherished customer in the international black market for arms, he was the one who enriched Oliver North's "residual funds" for the Nicaraguan contras.

The prevailing tendency in the United States media to portray Islam as unchanging, out-of-history, or an all-encompassing explanation of events is a misjudgment that hampers a badly needed understanding of Islam as a cultural system. Most important, it is a mistake to assume that a fanatic or morbid version of political Islam is shared by a majority of Muslims. The sustained and sensational emphasis on Islam as the defining trait of the Middle East has compelled a whole generation of Americans who have come to see the aspirations and political struggles of Middle Easterners only in terms of religion or religious fanaticism.

A realistic view of the contemporary Middle East demands the application of historical knowledge to societies caught in the convulsive processes of transformation. Generalizations, labels, and stereotypes blunt the kind of awareness that could steer Washington to play a positive role in the future democratization of the Middle East. The agenda of many Islamists is much closer to that of their secular counterparts than to the project of their fundamentalist rivals. The progressive or liberal Islamists, like the secularists, need an open political environment to present their views, while the Islamic fundamentalists can be more effective when they act as outlaws or underground preachers. In Iran, before the 1979 revolution, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi could neutralize the secularists and liberal Islamists by denying them freedom of expression, but he could not prevent the clerics from preaching their political message in mosques.

Islamic fundamentalists may be appealing when they are in opposition, but in Iran, where they have been in power for 14 years, popular resentment against them is deep and widespread. An increased dependence on the import of basic necessities, a 50 percent decrease in real income, the creation of a super-rich business class, 25 percent unemployment, 20 percent annual inflation, and a critical housing shortage for middle- and low-income people constitute the Islamic republic's economic record. War, isolation, hostage-taking, and a reputation for supporting terrorism have been the main ingredients of the Iranian theocrats' foreign policy. Such failures confirm the view that Islamic fundamentalism is incapable of solving the problems facing the Middle East.

In fact, it is becoming increasingly evident that Islamic fundamentalism is largely a manifestation of atavism, a common occurrence in societies undergoing rapid social change. Atavism is a form of nostalgia; it exhibits a tendency to romanticize an earlier era to such an extent that it becomes a complete distortion. Calls for restoration of Arab unity, Islamic solidarity, and religious purity assume a golden age of perfection that has more to do with the imagination of believers

than with the facts of history. These slogans are actually sentimental messages intended to express dissatisfaction with the present and a longing for existential peace in the midst of uncertainty and powerlessness. The complexity of this development is demonstrated by the fact that not only are large segments of the population becoming increasingly Westernized in their sociocultural behavior and political orientation, but also that religious fundamentalist themselves exhibit paradoxical tendencies.

The Iranian clerics claim that their Islamic state defies the Western models, but their creation is called a "republic" with a "constitution" and a "president" and a "five year plan" for economic development. To make sure no one doubts the pristine nature of their achievement, Teheran's theocrats have established an apparatus of coercion exclusively charged with preventing women from appearing in public unveiled.

Islam's current appeal as an answer to societal crises follows the failure of nationalism and socialism in the Middle East during the postcolonial era. The dictatorial regimes that promised economic development, political pride, and cultural autonomy are faced with mass discontent at home and the spread of democracy abroad. The pro-democracy forces do not as yet have a large enough social base or popular constituency to challenge the discredited incumbents. Their weakness is, at least in part, the result of being the primary victims of political repression in every Middle Eastern country in the past three decades. Dissident Islamists were also suppressed but not to the same extent. The Islamists' advantage largely lies in the effectiveness of their rhetoric and reliance on the sanctity of tradition. In contrast, secular democratic discourse seeks to implant new values and standards into the native political culture. This is the same kind of struggle that the proponents of democracy in the West had to go through, a struggle that often involved war, violence, and social disruption before the procedures and institutions of democracy were established.

THE CHOICE FOR THE UNITED STATES

Since President Woodrow Wilson, many American analysts and policymakers have supported the advancement of democracy in the world because representative democracies are more likely to view their conflicts with other countries in a spirit of compromise and accommodation. The first thinker to make a case for this proposition was Immanuel Kant. His characterization of autocrats or feudal monarchs as the "proprietors" of the state is literally applicable to a number of Middle Eastern heads of state: Saddam Hussein and Hafez Assad act as if they own the nation they rule. (The Iran-Iraq War, which caused nearly a million deaths

and over a trillion dollars worth of material loss, was actually a feud between two "proprietors" of the state.) Studies by contemporary social scientists strongly support Kant's observation. Indeed, "with only very marginal exceptions, democratic states have not fought one another in the modern era."²

Given the growing interdependence of the Middle East and the industrialized world, the West in general and the United States in particular can play a significant role in giving the pro-democracy forces the needed confidence to carry on the struggle. The instability and uncertainty likely to result from this strategy should be juxtaposed against the probable consequences of alliance with dictators. It used to be argued that leaders like the Shah, Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines, and Manuel Noriega of Panama were necessary instruments in the United States efforts to contain communism. As it turned out, the defeat of communism did not need help from despots.

The fate of Washington's ties to Saddam Hussein is the latest example of how unpredictable and costly collaboration with dictators can be. It is now evident that Saddam saw the attitude of the Reagan and Bush administrations toward him as a green light to pursue his own expansionist agenda. After all, Washington had rewarded his aggression against Iran. President Bush should not have been surprised about Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Saddam Hussein was the man who used poison gas to silence his Kurdish countrymen. It was unrealistic to assume that such a leader's treatment of his neighbors or his relationship with the United States would be more civil or lawful than the way he treated the Iraqi people.

Indeed, it has often been the case that the long-term losses of affiliating with despots outweigh the short-term benefits. A tragic example of treating dictators or their conflicts as opportunities for United States foreign policy was the Reagan administration's manipulation of the Iran-Iraq war. In 1981, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger expressed the essence of United States policy when he said "the ultimate American interest" in the Iran-Iraq War would be served if "both sides lose." The Reagan operatives' diligent pursuit of this "ultimate American interest" led to secret arms sales to both Iran and Iraq and a sustained game of deception between the White House and the two protagonists; it also helped to prolong the war and aided the massive buildup of the Iraqi military machine. It was not until 1987, when the Iran-contra revelations exposed United States-Iran contacts and the fighting threatened Kuwait and shipping in the Gulf, that the United States seriously pursued a UN-sponsored cease-fire.

Dictatorship is at the root of instability and violence in the Middle East and the remedy lies in movement toward democracy. The most obvious and urgent place to begin a departure from the past practices is in the area of human rights. The media and the Congress

²Bruce Russett, *Controlling the Sword: The Domestic Governance of National Security*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 23.

should include Middle Eastern humanity among those whose rights need sustained international recognition and protection.

The successes of democracy in eastern Europe and Latin America and the demise of totalitarian ideologies promise to energize the cause of democratization in the Middle East. During the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s an assortment of radical leftists and xenophobic nationalists dismissed human rights advocacy as irrelevant. They saw the malaise of the region as a result of imperialism or neocolonialism and considered armed struggle the only solution. In recent years, the leftists seem to be going through a conversion. They no longer claim to have a monopoly of "Truth" or knowledge of "Historical Laws." Their publications are filled with reflective commentary, self-criticism, and an urgent expression of interest in human rights issues. This development promises to strengthen the ranks and the spirit of the pro-democracy forces.

The United States Agency for International Development's Democracy Promotion Initiative (DPI) makes it an explicit goal of American foreign policy to foster the development of democratic political systems and open, pluralistic economies and societies. AID's Bureau for Asia, the Near East, and Europe is entrusted with the responsibility of devising appropriate strategies to pursue the goals of DPI. This guideline has had a significant impact on United States policy in eastern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Africa but not the Middle East. The Human Rights Division of the State Department has a legal mandate to issue an annual report on the human rights situation around the world. Accordingly, every year the department publishes details of gross human rights violations in the states of the Middle East and the White House ignores the information. The pro-democracy forces working for the democratization of many dictatorships have their advocates in the United States Congress, but there is not a single such advocate for any Middle Eastern country on Capitol Hill.

In the fall of 1990 the exiled government of Kuwait called on the international community to monitor human rights conditions in occupied Kuwait. Since the restoration of the Kuwaiti regime, international human rights organizations have frequently referred to this precedent and asked the government of Kuwait to respect the rights of its own dissidents and immigrant workers. The recent parliamentary elections in Kuwait, however limited and defective, were a step in the right direction. The United States ought to use its considerable leverage with the Kuwaiti rulers to build on this incremental progress.

Middle East Watch has documented that "Egypt's General Directorate for State Security Investigation regularly resorts to physical and psychological torture during the period when political and security suspects are held in incommunicado detention."³ It is astonishing that the United States remains silent in the face of such behavior by the second-largest recipient of its economic and military aid. The popular political atmosphere in the Middle East is exceptionally ripe for international public diplomacy in defense of human rights. As Youssef Ibrahim, a *New York Times* correspondent, has reported: "ever since Kuwait was invaded, the single theme on which Arab writers and commentators in the Arab media have almost unanimously agreed has been the need for democracy and freedom."⁴ The United States can seize the opportunity and help the nascent impulse toward democracy in the Middle East. Success in this endeavor will make a more effective contribution to peace and stability than alliance with dictators.

However contradictory or limited Washington's support for democratic movements appears to be, the fact remains that the United States is the most powerful promoter of democracy in a number of Asian, African, and Latin American countries, as well as in the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe. In Washington's view it is only the Middle East that is "not yet ready" for democratization. Even attention to human rights, the basic precondition for inculcation of democratic norms, is absent in the official United States attitude toward the governments of the region. Washington cannot be indifferent to gross human rights violations in one part of the world while celebrating the rise of democracy everywhere else.

DEMOCRACY OR DICTATORSHIP?

So long as repressive regimes rule the Middle East, border disputes, religious sectarianism, arms races, and armed conflict will remain the ingredients of both domestic and inter-state politics in the region. High-technology weapons have continued to flow unabated to the area since the end of the cold war. With dictators remaining in power, it is simply a matter of time before weapons of mass destruction are added to the arsenals of the various protagonists. The paradox and its challenge are obvious: the United States has to acknowledge the dilemma and begin to search for an innovative approach to the unique circumstances of the region. President-elect Bill Clinton has promised to make promotion of democracy a more central concern of United States foreign policy. He has referred to Haiti and China as countries where the Bush administration failed to support the pro-democracy forces. He has also criticized Bush for "coddling" Saddam Hussein. It remains to be seen whether promotion of human rights will become, for the first time, an element of United States Middle East policy in an American administration.

³*Behind Closed Doors: Torture And Detention In Egypt* (New York: Middle East Watch, 1992).

⁴Youssef Ibrahim, "The Rulers Will Have to Face the Music," *The New York Times*, February 24, 1991.

The southern Caucasus, currently in turmoil because of the undeclared war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, "lies at the confluence of the aspirations and fears of Turkey and Iran." The waning of Russia's influence, the need for development, and the region's many historical ties to its neighbors to the south may pull the two former Soviet republics into the Middle Eastern sphere—but on whose side?

Armenia and Azerbaijan: Looking toward the Middle East

BY WILLIAM WARD MAGGS

Newly independent Armenia and Azerbaijan, which since the early nineteenth century had been part of the Russian and then the Soviet empire, are now becoming part of the Middle East, with the consent and encouragement of the international community. This shift reflects not only the way the new countries are seen by the regional and global powers that have always determined their fate, but also the view that they take of their place in the world. At the same time, the traditional pattern of complex, shifting alliances and episodic violence is rapidly reasserting itself in the region as historic ethnic and tribal borders reemerge in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse. The three-year-old undeclared war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the latter's autonomous republic of Nagorno-Karabakh could be a model for escalating conflicts in Georgia, the northern Caucasus, and elsewhere in Azerbaijan.

For makers of foreign policy in western Europe and the United States, the Armenian-Azerbaijani confrontation has acquired a doomed air of inevitability. Just as with the Yugoslav crisis, United States State Department officials invoke the buzzword of Lebanon when discussing what they see as a morass of age-old ethnic and sectarian animosities. Fearing entanglement, and preoccupied with problems at home, Western countries have not taken a direct interest in events in Armenia and Azerbaijan. This has contributed to a feeling that the region can only be secure under the

control of one of the regional powers that dominated it in the past: Russia, Turkey, or Iran.

Armenia and Azerbaijan are small countries important for many of the same reasons as other Middle Eastern states: for the natural resources they contain or the transport routes they lie athwart, and for their position between Europe and Asia. But most strategically, the southern Caucasus lies at the confluence of the aspirations and fears of Turkey and Iran, two of the most powerful countries in the Middle East. If there is to be a major war between these two, it will come in Armenia and Azerbaijan, where their interests will most actively collide. But in spite of the rivalry between Turkey and Iran—or perhaps as a result of it—the Caucasus has for some time been moving away from Russia, and toward what Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan calls the "Middle Eastern sphere."¹

MISMATCH IN AZERBAIJAN

Modern Azeri nationalism was forged in reaction to Russian and Soviet rule, but the society has been shaped in a more profound way by its earlier domination by Turkey and Persia. The marks of all three empires are apparent today as Azerbaijan determines its own identity.

Azeris are a Turkic-speaking people living between the Black and Caspian Seas. Their culture and social and political institutions are predominantly Turkish, since the greatest portion of their history has been lived under Turkish and Ottoman rule. Most Azeris think of themselves as closely related to the Turks, and this is a key element in Turkey's influence—although perhaps not as important as the fact that Turkey provides an example of a successful Islamic state integrated into the world economy.

However, as a result of extended periods of Persian control most Azeris have long been adherents of the Shia sect of Islam—the state religion of Iran—rather

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¹Interview with Levon Ter-Petrosyan, Yerevan, Armenia, August 1992. All other unsourced quotations in this article are from personal interviews conducted in Yerevan in August.

than the Sunni Islam of the Turks. During the more than three centuries of Turkish-Iranian competition for Azerbaijan, the Azeris fought more often on the Iranian side, and Persian influence pervades Azerbaijan's language and culture.²

Russia has wielded economic and political clout in the area since conquering it in 1813. The oilfields near Baku developed by czarist Russia were among the first in the world, and their continuous exploitation for more than a century brought Baku a small measure of wealth and cosmopolitan culture as well as a large measure of environmental degradation. Another consequence of the oil economy was that Azerbaijan was the only part of the Soviet Muslim world where the Communist effort to create a modern urban proletariat made much headway. This restive segment of society is a vital source of support for the Azerbaijan Popular Front (APF), the nationalist movement that now rules the country.

The modern state of Azerbaijan is a poor fit with the Azeri national identity. Most Azeris do not live in Azerbaijan; at least 10 million to 12 million live in the northern provinces of Iran, about twice as many as live in the former republic of Azerbaijan (stretching the definition of Azeri, as many as 20 million Iranians can be considered to be Azeris). This fact, the result of an 1828 agreement between Russia and Iran to divide the Turkic-speaking southern Caucasus at the Araz River, forms the basis for Iran's overriding interest in developing relations with Armenia and Azerbaijan.

An artificial Soviet form of Azeri nationalism promoted by Stalin was one lever used against Iran during the Stalinist period. Another of Stalin's machinations was the inclusion of the former khanate of Nakhichevan, which is surrounded by Iran, Armenia, and a few miles of Turkey, as an outlier of the republic of Azerbaijan. The arid region once had a mixed Azeri-Armenian population but became predominantly Azeri under Communist rule, as the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh became Armenian. Although geographically isolated, Nakhichevan produced many of Azerbaijan's Communist leaders, as well as Abulfaz Elchibey, the current president.

Azerbaijan is a multiethnic state, and divisions within it are widening. The Azeri majority in Azerbaijan is larger than the eponymous ethnic group in some of the other former Soviet republics. But Azerbaijan is a patchwork of geographically compact groups of peoples with irredentist claims and national ambitions, among which the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh are merely the best-known example.

Kurds have been living in the mountainous lands between Karabakh and Armenia for centuries, and have long been under pressure from Azeris to assimilate. The Kurdish population, estimated at anywhere between 200,000 and 500,000, is caught in the middle of the Armenian-Azeri war. Last June the leader of the Caucasian Kurds, Rachman Mustafayev, declared an independent republic of Kurdistan. In addition, Kurdish fighters have been helping Armenian forces keep open a supply corridor between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh running through Azerbaijani territory.³

Another smoldering dispute is with the Lezghi, a Caucasian people whose population straddles the border between Azerbaijan and Russia. Nearly 200,000 Lezghi live in Azerbaijan, and an equivalent number to the north in Dagestan, an autonomous Caucasian republic in Russia. Attempts last July to close the border led to violent demonstrations and the attempted deployment of Russian special forces, which were soon forced to withdraw. The oil pipelines that carry Azerbaijan's most important export run through the border area, so the Azerbaijani government can ill afford to grant the Lezghi the autonomy they seek.

These irredentist disputes and others involving smaller groups not only help frame Azerbaijan's domestic and foreign policies but will ultimately determine the shape of the country: Azerbaijan's western border will be decided by the war over Nagorno-Karabakh and settling of the question of what will happen to Nakhichevan. The northern border can only be determined by a resolution of the Lezghi claims, and the southern border will depend on relations with the much larger Azeri population in Iran.

Russia's rapidly waning influence has allowed centrifugal forces to pull Azerbaijan in the direction of the Middle East. This process accelerated in August 1991, when President Ayaz Mutalibov supported the attempted coup in Moscow, then insisted on committing Azerbaijan to membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Mutalibov was ousted in February 1992, and the Popular Front and former Communists formed a coalition government; membership in the CIS was repudiated, and the government called for the withdrawal of all Russian troops. More recently Elchibey confirmed Azerbaijan's position outside the CIS, while not ruling out entry at a later date. Last May Mutalibov tried to regain power, but the Popular Front responded with a bloodless coup. In June Popular Front leader Elchibey was elected president in relatively free multiparty elections. Since then, the Russian army has begun to pull out, leaving behind many of its weapons for the Azeris to use in prosecuting the war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Russian center is also fast losing its economic influence over Azerbaijan. Elchibey announced plans last year to introduce a new currency, the manat, to hedge against a possible flood of rubles. Trade with

²Audrey Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks: Power and Identity Under Russian Rule*, (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1992), pp. 5-14.

³Interview with Rachman Mustafayev, Yerevan, Armenia, August 1992.

Russia is plummeting. Last October Azerbaijan closed a \$2.4-billion deal with United States-based Pennzoil for development of the Guneshli offshore oilfield in the Caspian Sea, with no role for the Russians. And in an interview in July, Elchibey said his government was bypassing the central government in Russia and negotiating directly with local officials in the Tyumen oil-producing region in order to maintain supplies of crude for Azerbaijan's petroleum processing industry, the country's largest industrial sector. A new treaty with Russia signed in October calls for only limited economic cooperation, although it appears to provide for transfer of Russian army matériel in Azerbaijan to the Azerbaijani defense ministry.

RIVALS FOR INFLUENCE IN AZERBAIJAN

Meanwhile, both Turkey and Iran have been trying to fill the void left by Russia. Turkey is currently winning the regional stakes for influence in Azerbaijan, but since last summer Iran has shown renewed interest in its northern neighbor.

In early May 1992 a delegation headed by Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel stopped in Baku on the way to a summit meeting for Central Asian republics. The visit was a major event in Azerbaijan, where Demirel was greeted "like a long lost relative."⁴ During the tour he pledged \$1.1 billion in development credits for the former Soviet Muslim republics, and detailed grand plans for oil and gas pipelines and trade routes from a Turkic economic community in Central Asia through Azerbaijan. But at an October summit of Turkic peoples hosted by Turkey the mood was less heady, and concrete commitments of aid were scarce. Indeed, the limits of Turkey's willingness to be either the security guarantor or economic savior of Azerbaijan have become apparent.

As the war over Nagorno-Karabakh has intensified and attempts to mediate a cease-fire by everyone from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan have failed, Turkey has not yet extended its military assistance beyond the loan of a few military advisers and small amounts of armor and artillery. There have been no repeats of President Turgut Ozal's threat last year to intervene in Nagorno-Karabakh. Earlier in the year Azerbaijan failed to get Turkey to agree to a defense pact that would have obligated it to guarantee Azerbaijan's security. Turkey balked at the proposal that it play Caucasian politics by the old rules and enter into an alliance that might have dragged it into a major war.

It has become clear in the last few months, regarding Central Asia as well as Azerbaijan, that Turkey does not have the economic resources at this time to do much more than ship typewriters and television programs. With inflation running at more than 70 percent and a large budget deficit and slowing growth, there is little money to spare. But the mere announcement of plans for massive energy projects has had positive political effects, helping Turkey continue to appear to the West as dynamic and in control.

While Turkey seeks close relations with Azerbaijan because it has much to gain, Iran is doing the same because it has much to lose. Iran does not want to see a strong, nationalistic Azeri state stirred by pan-Turkism raise the temperature in its own Azeri-populated north—which is part of the reason for Iran's limited support of Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh war. At the same time, since early 1992 Iran has attempted to play peacemaker in that conflict, partly because of the government's campaign to improve its international image. In May the combatants were just sitting down to a peace conference brokered by Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati when Shusha, the last Azeri stronghold in Nagorno-Karabakh, fell. The peace talks failed, Elchibey upbraided Velayati in the press, and Iran was publicly embarrassed.

Iran will have difficulty gaining political influence so long as Elchibey and the Azerbaijan Popular Front remain in power. Elchibey's antipathy for the fundamentalist side of Iranian politics is matched only by Iran's suspicions that pan-Turkism is inherent in the APF's platform of "democracy, Turkism, and Islam." Just days after his election, Elchibey rejected the idea that Azerbaijan should follow an "Iranian path," and he has repeatedly sought to deemphasize Islam's role in his country's politics. But in the past few months Iran has become much more diplomatically active in the Caucasus, and with some success. Instead of addressing the Nagorno-Karabakh war head on, the Iranian tactic has been to help Azerbaijan aid Nakhichevan by sending shipments of food, oil, and coal to the republic, which has been closed to traffic from Armenia for months. Iran also agreed to build a railroad line from Azerbaijan to Nakhichevan through its own territory.

The formation of the pro-Iranian Islamic Party of Azerbaijan in October 1992 was noted with delight on Turkish radio in Iran, and while their membership is still small, fundamentalist parties are gaining popularity by criticizing the APF on the war. Pan-Turkist extremist political parties have also surfaced, but enjoy little support.

In the long run, however, Azerbaijan's orientation within the Middle East will be determined by which country has the most to offer economically—Turkey or Iran. Turkey is clearly the front-runner, and is taking the key role in transforming Azerbaijan from within. Turkey is not just organizing the future army of

⁴The quotation is from Asal Azamova, "The Hour of Decision: For Turkey or Pan-Turkism?" *Moscow News*, May 27, 1992; see also Robert Mauthner, "Turkey Strides Firmly onto a New Stage," *Financial Times*, May 12, 1992, p. 2.

Azerbaijan but is training diplomats and government officials in Istanbul, providing technical assistance to industry, and, above all, fostering the idea of Azerbaijan as part of a greater Turkic community. As for Iran, even its expansive schemes seem defensive, responses to the Turkish lead. Last October Iran hosted a meeting of the nations bordering the Caspian Sea to promote trade, economic development, and environmental cooperation among them. It calls the group the Caspian Sea Cooperation Council—evidently after the Black Sea Cooperation Council established by Turkey last year for identical reasons.

Throughout fall 1992, a series of ever more grandiose schemes for transporting the oil and gas riches of Central Asia through Azerbaijan to world markets were proposed. The Turkish state pipeline company Botas is trying to convince Elchibey and Central Asian leaders to back its consortium's bid to build an oil pipeline from Kazakhstan and a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan, both of them to run under the Caspian Sea, through Azerbaijan and Armenia, and on to Turkey, the European gas grid, and beyond.

But a group of investors from Oman claims it has gained support for an oil pipeline through Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia, and the breakaway Chechen republic. Oman has also extended a \$200-million credit to Azerbaijan for new petroleum production equipment. Indeed, educational and cultural assistance provided to Azerbaijan by Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states represents more than neighborly interest and Muslim solidarity by the cash-rich Arab countries, but areas for future investment.

Proposed development plans would cost tens of billions of dollars, but an even greater obstacle is political stability. A functioning pipeline through the region would require that virtually everyone in the Caucasus be simultaneously at peace, and for centuries such peace has only been possible only when occupying armies have enforced it.

ARMENIA'S ISOLATION

While Azerbaijan's affinity for the Middle East is clearly identifiable as Russian dominance recedes, the position of Armenia in the international community is much more problematic. Armenia's difficulties underline the pitfalls and possible limits of independence in its part of the world. The country has pursued the kind of internationalist foreign policy that the United Nations and major powers advocate; as a result, no one appears willing to strongly support the country, and Armenia is now arguably one of the most isolated nations in the world. Attempting to go beyond traditional policy built on surrogates and regional domination and instead seek balanced relations with all its neighbors, Armenia has received inaction from the UN, lack of interest from the United States, and an economic embargo that is gradually strangling the country.

In short, in trying to avoid serious enemies Armenia has been left with no good friends.

The engineers of this foreign policy are Armenian President Ter-Petrosyan and his advisers. Like Azerbaijan's Elchibey, Ter-Petrosyan was elected by the direct vote of the people. But he has progressively lost support, primarily because of his efforts to internationalize the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and seek a collective security arrangement for his country. "Our domestic situation is now determined by foreign policy, by events beyond our control," Ter-Petrosyan has said. The government admitted last June that 40 percent of the state budget went for the war. Many think that figure is conservative.

The battle for Nagorno-Karabakh has come to be viewed by many Armenians as synonymous with the survival of Armenia itself. Although Armenians' claim to the mountainous enclave may be debated, it is clear that Azerbaijan is trying to drive the 120,000 Armenians left in Nagorno-Karabakh out of the area, and just as clear that the Armenians will not leave. The thought of large numbers of Armenians driven from their land and dying at the hands of Azeri Turks calls up memories of the 1915 genocidal campaign in which more than 1 million Armenians died, and triggers something very deep in Armenian hearts; the country is committed to independence for Nagorno-Karabakh.

The political opposition to Ter-Petrosyan, led by the Dashnak party, a left-wing nationalist group based in the large and prosperous Armenian diaspora, vilifies the president for not raising an army and for continuing to seek a negotiated solution. Opposition members have been calling for his resignation for months. Vahan Hovannisian, leader of the Dashnak party in Armenia and the man most often mentioned as a rival to Ter-Petrosyan, maintains that if Nagorno-Karabakh is given up Azerbaijan will want other Armenian lands. He has accused the president of leading the country to disaster.

This is more than partisan politicking; it is a fundamental debate about how Armenia can exist as a country. For many Armenians of the diaspora, most of whom came from what is now Turkey after escaping the 1915 genocide, Turkey will always be the enemy, and Armenia must do what it takes to survive in a world of hostile Turks to the west and Azeris to the east. Armenia, they believe, must have a protector, and for Dashnak the only possible protector is Russia. "We must have close relations with Russia," Hovannisian has insisted. "This should not be domination," he added, "but if it must, so be it."

On the other hand, Ter-Petrosyan and those who support him maintain that Armenia will always be a pawn easily sacrificed so long as the country allows its fate to be determined by a single protector—the "Russian uncle" being only the most recent of these. "We have been under the control of the Russians for a

long time, and it has not protected us," Ter-Petrosyan has said. "The only way for us is to be part of a collective security framework."

Ter-Petrosyan's goal of neutrality and even-handed relations with Russia, Iran, and Turkey would initially require the support of the international community, which Ter-Petrosyan equates with organizations like the CSCE and the UN. His reliance on the rhetoric of a new world order has been the president's most serious foreign policy mistake. It is striking, however, that Ter-Petrosyan and his advisers feel that in the long run collective security will only be possible for Armenia through a Middle Eastern security system. "In time Armenia, like other Middle Eastern countries, must cooperate with all the Middle Eastern countries. They will have to eventually guarantee their own security," Ter-Petrosyan says.

But an independent foreign policy is impossible for now, not because the war over Nagorno-Karabakh is an insurmountable problem but because it is only one of Armenia's problems. More than 600,000 Armenians fled to Armenia from Azerbaijan as tensions over Nagorno-Karabakh heightened. The devastating earthquake that struck northern Armenia in 1988 killed between 50,000 and 75,000 people and destroyed the homes of more than 200,000 others. Ethnic cleansing operations in Azerbaijan and natural disasters at home have left nearly 1 million people out of Armenia's population of 3.5 million living more or less as refugees, with little prospect of improvement. The economic embargo has left the country with scant fuel for the winter, and even less bread.

The protracted state of crisis has forced Armenia to move away from Russia more rapidly. The civil war in Georgia has severed supply lines from Russia. All the other railway and road connections to the former Soviet Union pass through Azerbaijan, and these have been cut for a year now. Armenia has been pushed more and more to look to Middle Eastern neighbors to the south and east for basic goods. Armenian factories that made military equipment and other items for the Soviet Union are operating at 10 percent capacity or less.

Last August Ter-Petrosyan signed a pact with Russian President Boris Yeltsin that will maintain one and a half divisions of Russian troops in Armenia through 1993. Despite this tactical move, Russian troops are all but invisible in Armenia, as are the few Russian civilians still living there. According to a teacher in the once-thriving Russian school in Yerevan, classes are almost empty. Courses in English are the best attended, but Arabic and Farsi are also popular, she said.

ATTEMPTS TO BOND

In turning to the Middle East, Armenia is reaffirming an identity historically oriented toward the region. The distinctive Armenian culture developed over many centuries of life alongside Turks, Arabs, Persians, and

other Middle Eastern peoples. The Armenian community in Iran, Lebanon, Syria, and countries throughout the region plays an ever more important role in Armenia's internal politics. There are now as many flights each week from Yerevan to Damascus and other cities in the Middle East as there are to Moscow, Paris, or the United States.

Armenia has increasingly looked to Iran for economic ties and political support, and it has found them. Full diplomatic relations are in the process of being established between the two countries, and Foreign Minister Velayati continues to press for peace in Nagorno-Karabakh.

"Iran is the future for us," Rouben Yegoryan, an assistant to the Armenian minister of construction in charge of planning Armenia's future infrastructure, said in an interview. "The highest priority is improving road and rail links to Iran," he continued. "This will give us access to Iran's markets and to Persian Gulf ports." Like Armenians from all walks of life, Yegoryan was extremely positive about Iran, and took great pains to explain that Americans tend to have a distorted picture of that country. "We think that within a few years Iran will be our most important trading partner," he said.

There are two reasons for goodwill from Teheran. First, a rich and influential Armenian community has lived side by side with the Persians in Iran for centuries, and continues to do so today. Iran sees great promise in developing commerce with Armenia and gaining access to trade and energy transport routes that lead all the way to Europe. But Iran would also like to promote a stable Armenian state as a hedge against Turkey, its fundamental rival in the Middle East. It wants an Azerbaijan stable enough to keep Turkish troops out of the Caucasus but, as previously mentioned, not strong enough to stoke nationalism among its own Azeri population.

As for Armenia and Turkey, last August, as the Karabakh war raged, a delegation headed by the Turkish foreign ministry's first secretary traveled to Yerevan for talks that Armenian officials called the beginning of a process that should lead to diplomatic relations between the two countries by early 1993. This would mark the first time the countries have had diplomatic relations of any kind since 1915. "We may not agree with the current Turkish government, but they are reasonable," said Ter-Petrosyan adviser Gerard Libaridian. "They can see mutual interest in peace. That may not be true of the next government."

For many Armenians, especially those in the diaspora, this kind of reconciliation would have been unthinkable just a short time ago. Turkey has never acknowledged the 1915 genocide, and for some Armenians Turkey will always be the enemy. But the severing of trade routes through Georgia and the economic embargo have changed Armenian priorities.

Last fall, after a summer of severe bread shortages, Armenia concluded negotiations on importing 100,000 tons of grain from Turkey. The border with Turkey, once one of the most closely guarded in the world, has become porous to smuggling.

THE REGIONAL PICTURE

Russia, faced with a profound identity crisis in foreign policy, has been successful at maintaining some leverage over both Armenia and Azerbaijan. It has alternately supported each side by offering economic assistance or making weapons available, thus keeping both countries weak and more dependent on Russia than they would like. Russia's intent is to blunt Turkish hegemony by whatever means, while avoiding involvement in Caucasian wars. A string of north Caucasian republics within Russia that are rich in natural resources, influenced by events farther south, are taking up arms for independence as Russia becomes ever more entangled in the civil war in Georgia. Russia must articulate the limits of its interests, whether the lines fall at its southern border, in Georgia, or in Armenia and Azerbaijan; these would correspond to the "concentric circles" of foreign policy that Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev has spoken of.

Even strong Russian nationalists in the foreign policy establishment concede that Russia may never again control events in the southern Caucasus. Andranik Migranyan, director of the CIS Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of International Economic and Political Research, proposed in an essay in the August 4, 1992, issue of *Rossiiskaya gazeta* that even after pulling out of the Caucasus, "Russia's vital interests be safeguarded through the efforts of countries there that are able to act in Russia's long-term interests, proceeding from their own goals"—namely Armenia and Azerbaijan. The way Russia disengages from the two countries will determine the way they enter into the Middle East.

While its large Azeri population in a rebellious mood would represent a much more serious national security threat to Iran than excitable Caucasians would to Russia, there is little evidence that the former is a possibility anytime soon. The Turkic Iranians appear well integrated into Iranian life and relatively content. But Iran wants to have a lasting role in whatever happens in Azerbaijan because ultimately its most vital interest in the Middle East is coming to terms with Turkey. It is to Iran's advantage to be a good neighbor. Iran realizes that Azerbaijan will seek some sort of

mutual relations to protect against overly strong domination by Turkey. Iran also can legitimately seek to provide the Azeris with an alternative example of a society that is dynamic and moving toward freer markets while retaining a strong Islamic identity and the rule of Islamic law. But Iran's concerns about its own security could lead an Iranian government more radical than the current one to react more strongly.

Turkey's interests in the southern Caucasus are self-evident: access to Central Asia's natural resources and markets, the stability of Kurdish eastern Turkey, and its possible emergence as a regional superpower. Its biggest problem in the region is the expectations of the United States and other Western countries.

The United States cultivated Turkey as its principal ally because of cold war thinking and fears of fundamentalism, which caused Americans and other Westerners to overlook some of Turkey's problems and ask it to do too much, too fast. Now Turkey is being given yet another assignment: to create order in the Caucasus and Central Asia. As with what is seen as Germany's role in eastern Europe, Western expectations that Turkey will blithely shepherd secular, market-oriented democratic states in the Caucasus and Central Asia toward modernity could put a tremendous strain on the former imperial power. Despite rapid growth, Turkey is not yet economically sound, and it is by no means an internally stable state; its 10 million Kurds are not truly part of the democratic society that may exist in other parts of the country.

From Europe's point of view, the more Turkey, encouraged by the United States, becomes diplomatically and economically active in the former Soviet Union's southern tier, the harder it will become for the European Community to absorb Turkey's economy and political instability. Already pan-Turkist politics is becoming part of the political mainstream in Turkey, as anti-immigrant politics has become in Germany.

The United States policy of marginalizing the Armenian-Azeri war and relying on Turkey in the region needs to be seriously rethought. It does not serve American policy goals, and contradicts the objective of integrating Turkey into Europe. At the same time, pro forma support for international peacemaking efforts through the UN and CSCE simply prolong settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which can only take place with the full involvement of Russia, Turkey, and Iran, as well as the United States. As with the current Middle East peace talks, the United States presence can have a crucial effect. ■

"[I]n consciously forwarding policies that are inimical to its conservative Arab neighbors, Teheran is adhering to the very principles that allowed the Islamic Republic to come into being." But the rulers of Iran are also taking a pragmatic and conciliatory tone in some of their dealings with the countries of the region, including Turkey and the new Central Asian states.

Iran's Foreign Policy: Between Enmity and Conciliation

BY JERROLD D. GREEN

All politics in the Middle East is regional. Religion, ideology, ethnicity, large disparities in wealth, competing strategic ambitions, and historical rivalries compel Middle Eastern states to deal with and be influenced by one another on a regular basis—no state can quietly go its own way. And a state's regional role tells a great deal about its domestic politics and economic and strategic concerns, as well as its past and its future.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is hardly an exception. Iran's most significant interactions are regional. (Conflict between the United States and Iran, for example, has more to do with Iran's regional involvements than with narrower American-Iranian concerns.) Moreover, there is a distinct dualism in Iran's regional foreign policy, which combines aggressive policies toward some of the region's actors with a more conciliatory stance toward others. It is largely because of its regional policies that Iran has earned reprobation from so many in the international community, and approval from so few.

ISOLATION AND AMITY

Policymakers in Teheran are seriously concerned about Iran's possible isolation in the Middle East. Iran

fought a brutal eight-year war with neighboring Iraq, ending in 1988, and the two countries remain deeply distrustful of each other. The six Arab states that make up the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—collectively regard Iran as dominated by religious fanatics obsessed with spiritual and political imperialism. Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam and home of its holiest sites, feels particularly threatened by the Islamic Republic. Long accustomed to heading the premier Islamic state, the Saudis are exceedingly uncomfortable with a challenger to that claim, especially one so close by. Regular charges by Iranian leaders that the Saudi leadership is crassly exploiting Islam to protect its enormous wealth and privilege hardly endear Iran to those in Riyadh.

Iran is responsible for much of its own isolation because of its continuing commitment to the export of Islamic revolution. Governments throughout the region, and in the Islamic world in general, harbor deep skepticism about Iranian ambitions. To this day Iran supports anti-government Islamic fundamentalist groups in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, and even on the Israeli-occupied West Bank.¹ Sudan, which is currently dominated by Islamic fundamentalists sympathetic to Iran, is working in concert with Teheran to foment fundamentalism regionally.

Although the personal commitment of Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to such activities remains unclear, influential members of his government are single-mindedly devoted to these and similar high-risk efforts, and to strengthen his less than secure position Rafsanjani allows his more radical colleagues to pursue their agenda. These factors, along with Western antipathy toward the Islamic Republic, Iran's disregard for international law during incidents such as the takeover of the American Embassy in Teheran in 1979, the death sentence on novelist Salman Rushdie,

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¹Indeed, Jordan's King Hussein demanded in a November 1992 speech that anti-regime Islamicists and, implicitly, their supporters in Teheran end their subversive activities. The heads of state of Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia have made similar public pronouncements.

and continuing Iranian support for international terrorism, all contribute to Iran's isolation within the region and in the wider world. The factors that separate the Islamic Republic from the more mainstream nations of the global community, be they Western, Arab, or Islamic, are so profound that although Iran is not a pariah state, it seems not terribly far from it.

Iran does have relations with some states in the region that, while less acrimonious than with others, can hardly be taken for granted by Teheran. To the east, Afghanistan is living through a period of intense uncertainty compounded by a brutal civil war. The six Islamic former Soviet republics north of Iran's Caspian Sea (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan) are the objects of a potentially lethal struggle for influence by regional powers such as Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, as well as the United States and even China. Should Iran lose, its northern border could become much less secure. Furthermore, Iran's ties with Turkey, an ally of the West and a NATO member, are obviously not enhanced by the Turkish government's opposition to the inclusion of Islam in public life. In short, Iranian policymakers are justifiably uneasy about national security, given their country's tenuous ties with the states around it.

IN THE WAKE OF THE WAR

The Persian Gulf War of January–February 1991, a watershed in Middle Eastern politics, provided Iran with an obvious opportunity both to improve relations with its neighbors and, more important, to expand its strategic influence in the Gulf region. Furthermore, the war's implications were important not only for its protagonists in the Middle East. For example, the status of the United States in the Arab world after the war rose so dramatically that it permitted America to sponsor direct, face-to-face peace negotiations between Israel and such Arab participants as Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians. The war and the resultant paralysis of Iraq, along with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, created regional strategic and political uncertainties, including a potential power vacuum in the Gulf. Teheran regarded this opening as tremendously promising. An immediate scramble for influence—read dominance—ensued, with Iran on one side and the GCC countries, working as a unit, on the other. Indeed, the outcome of this struggle, bound to be a prolonged one, will be crucial for Iranian foreign policy in years to come.

As was noted, Iran keenly fears isolation. Thus policies with a regional focus are attempts to minimize the risks of such separation. Although the Gulf War

briefly mitigated this problem for Iran, it did not eliminate it. Policymakers in Teheran were gratified by a course of events that embroiled their competitors and enemies—the United States, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt—in a broad-based war against another rival, Iraq. While the protagonists bloodied one another, Iran soon occupied the Islamic high ground, criticizing the presence of Western troops on Saudi soil, while watching the unwelcome foreigners defeat the Iraqi army. Iraq tried to protect some of its aircraft by moving them to Iran—a sign of desperation in Baghdad—but the Islamic Republic remained uninvolved in the war, concentrating instead on boosting oil production and pursuing domestic development. The Iranians would have preferred for the war to continue indefinitely, or to culminate in a simultaneous loss by all sides.

At much the same time, Iran hoped to take advantage of the situation by embarking on an uncharacteristically conciliatory policy course meant to smooth its reentry into the Gulf region while promoting Iranian hegemony. Throughout 1991 Iran reestablished diplomatic relations with Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and even Saudi Arabia. (Ties with the last had been broken in 1988 after the Saudis accused Iran of using Iranian pilgrims to foment political disturbances that culminated in riots during the sacred hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca.) There was even speculation about talks between Iran and the United States. In the face of Iraq's aggression, Iran suddenly looked less threatening. Iran contributed to its own apparent rehabilitation with a whirlwind of diplomatic activity, an apparent diminution in support for terrorist activity, and rhetoric from the highest levels about the desirability of rapprochement between the Islamic Republic and its erstwhile Arab competitors.

In April 1991 President Rafsanjani made a rare trip to Riyadh to meet with King Fahd. The two leaders issued a joint declaration stating their commitment to closer relations as a means of enhancing Gulf security. Rafsanjani concluded with a visit to Turkey, where he met with President Turgut Ozal. In May a group of Iranian pilgrims traveled to Saudi Arabia on the first hajj by Iranians since 1987. Later that month the Iranians hosted a conference in Isfahan on the significant theme of "Oil and Gas in the 1990s: Prospects for Cooperation." Oil officials from around the world, Americans included, attended, and were addressed by no lesser personages than the president, Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, and Petroleum Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh, all of whom emphasized the importance of regional cooperation with Iran's Arab neighbors.² Finally, in June, as if to emphasize the new spirit pervading the Gulf environs, Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, Saud al-Faisal, met with his Iranian counterpart in the first visit by a senior Saudi official to Iran in 12 years.

² For transcripts of these speeches see, *The Iranian Journal of International Affairs* (Teheran), vol. 3, no. 2 (Summer 1991).

As the postwar fervor abated, both Iran and its competitors reverted to type. Although Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had not been removed from power, he had been vanquished. Thus Iraq was, for the foreseeable future at least, subtracted from the complicated equation meant to culminate in a broadly acceptable formula for regional security. Iraq's removal from the war for regional dominance made the competition even more frenzied, as a key player had been sidelined, perhaps permanently. And although some speculated that as a consequence Iran might actually have "won" the Gulf War—a reasonable conclusion at the time—policymakers in Teheran opted for too much too quickly and soon upset the tentative and fragile arrangements that owed so much to Iraqi aggression. This brought a reversion to the distrust that had long characterized the Gulf, and the "cooperation" disappeared.

ALIENATION AS POLICY

Iranian foreign policy after the war was a complicated admixture of antagonism toward some neighboring actors, primarily the GCC countries, and attempts to improve ties with others, mostly Iran's non-Arab neighbors. This dual policy persists.

Ties between Iran and the GCC states have always been undermined by mutual distrust, though their rivalry abated somewhat during Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi's tenure. Iran and its Arab neighbors to the south can occasionally collaborate during extreme crises—for example, the insurrection in Oman's Dhofar province in the early 1970s, when the shah deployed troops, and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait—but never for long. Although Iran and the GCC talk of cooperation among all eight states in the area (the GCC countries, Iran, and Iraq), their actions belie their expressed sentiments. No government in the region believes its neighbors are completely trustworthy.

Indeed, more subtly, such feelings are evident even within the GCC. For example, the group's more southern members (Oman, the UAE, and Qatar) are geographically closer and thus more vulnerable to Iran. They have a tradition of trying to work with the larger country to the east, not against it. The more northern GCC states, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and to a lesser extent, Bahrain, have no such tradition, and feel more threatened by Iraq than Iran. Significantly, Saudi Arabia, the council's richest and largest member, has the greatest influence on GCC policy. Furthermore, although some states in the region may yearn for

regional political, strategic, and military arrangements collectively arrived at with their rivals, even these states realize that such arrangements can never exist; in the Gulf, idealism is quickly overtaken by reality.

The chasm between hopes and reality was again evident at the annual summit meeting of GCC heads of state held in Kuwait in December 1991 and, as is often the case, was attended by Iranian observers.³ According to Gulf observer John Duke Anthony, who was present at the meeting, one proposal by Oman's Sultan Qaboos suggested a tenfold increase in the size of the GCC's lilliputian 10,000-troop joint force in Saudi Arabia. Yet a split quickly emerged between the northern GCC members, primarily concerned with future threats by a resurgent Iraq, and those in the south, which view Iran as a more serious threat. Naturally Iran sided with the southern states, since it felt that such a GCC force would remove the need to rely on security guarantees by the West. Despite this split, however, Anthony points out that "concerns about Iran continue to run deep" in the Gulf Council. More specifically, there is legitimate concern about many of the issues discussed above, including attempts by Iran to export revolution, its strident opposition to foreign troops in Saudi Arabia, support for international terrorism, growing involvement in Muslim portions of the former Soviet Union, and desire for a dominant role in defining Gulf security. Thus, although Iran and the Gulf states may continue to work together, at least in the short term, it will be with mutual suspicion.

Shahram Chubin, a widely respected analyst of Iran, reaches conclusions much like those of the GCC states while at the same time recognizing the centrality of regionalism to Iranian foreign policy. He writes, "if Teheran truly wants an indigenous, collective approach to Persian Gulf security, it will have to recognize that the thrust of its policies in the wider region are bound to be judged as an indicator of overall intentions."⁴ Although this observation seems painfully obvious, it has yet to influence the actions of top policymakers in Teheran. One explanation for this blind spot is that in consciously forwarding policies that are inimical to its conservative Arab neighbors, Teheran is adhering to the very principles that allowed the Islamic Republic to come into being. We often forget that states may actually believe in the ideologies they so self-righteously recommend for others.

MORE WEAPONS

An area of Iranian activity that gravely concerns not only the Gulf region but the West as well is Teheran's nuclear weapons development effort, in conjunction with its weapons acquisition program. These initiatives were made financially feasible by the calm Iran enjoyed during the Gulf War, which allowed the country to increase oil production so dramatically that it became

³Much of this discussion relies on a report on the meeting by John Duke Anthony, "Betwixt War and Peace: The 12th GCC Heads of State Summit," *Middle East Insight*, vol. 8, no. 6 (July-October 1992), pp. 54-61.

⁴Shahram Chubin, "Iran and Regional Security in the Persian Gulf," *Survival*, vol. 34, no. 3 (Autumn 1992), p. 79.

the world's second-largest exporter, after Saudi Arabia. Ironically, oil revenues for this year, projected at anywhere from \$17 billion to \$20 billion, have allowed Iran to finance nuclear weapons development and rearmament projects whose goals are reminiscent of the Pahlavi era. According to one source, these ambitious policies entail annual expenditures of \$2 billion.⁵

Although Iranian leaders deny any desire to develop nuclear weapons, Iran has had a historical interest in the area. The shah had a more than theoretical fascination with nuclear energy, despite Iran's substantial oil and natural gas reserves, and this at the time stirred suspicions about possible military applications. Given Iran's concerns about its isolation, and the fact that other countries in the region possess nuclear weapons (Israel), are well along in their development of them (Pakistan), or have tried to develop them but had to suspend the effort (Iraq), an Iranian interest in acquiring a nuclear capability is understandable. Yet although there are reports of American-trained Iranian nuclear scientists working on this project, definitive information is unavailable, and, although the degree to which Iran is involved in the development of nuclear devices is hotly debated in Washington, no conclusions have been reached.⁶

More solid information is available on conventional arms acquisitions. Among the weapons purchased by Iran in recent months: three diesel submarines from Russia; tanks and armored personnel carriers from Russia, North Korea, and eastern European countries; and Russian MiG fighter aircraft and Sukoi bombers. Some even contend that Iran has positioned Silkworm missiles on the island of Abu Musa in the Persian Gulf. This island was jointly overseen by Iran and the UAE for more than 20 years until last April, when Iran unexpectedly sent in troops, expelled all UAE citizens, and claimed the strategically and symbolically important island as its own. Its actions such as these that fuel GCC member states' worries about Iranian expansionism.

Iran's rearmament and nuclear development efforts are of special concern to Washington, which fears threats to its fragile alliance with the GCC states. Furthermore, regional destabilization could harm the United States-sponsored Arab-Israeli peace negotiations and possibly imperil Israel (whose long-standing contention is that Iran is the single greatest threat to regional stability) and Arab oil producers.

The United States has urged its allies to impose a ban on arms sales to Iran. The ban would also encompass dual-use technology such as high-speed computers, relevant software, and sophisticated electronics that appear to have primarily peaceful applications but could also be diverted to military uses, including the development of nuclear weapons. Iran has purchased millions of dollars worth of such technology from companies around the world—the United States among them. The American desire to restrict dissemination of these items, as well as conventional military hardware, comes out of the experience with Iraq, which stock piled such exports when restrictions were loose and then relied on them in its invasion of Kuwait. There are significant differences between Iraq and Iran, but the United States does not want to make the same mistake again.

America's allies have been cool to Washington's proposed ban. Cognizant of the money made by American companies in Iran, Japan has been particularly opposed to restrictions. At a Group of Seven meeting last November, the United States failed to persuade the other members (Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Britain, and Canada) to ban the sale of either weapons or dual-use technology to Iran; potential profits for the sellers are simply too high. Subsequently, the United States even importuned Russia to cancel the planned submarine sales to Teheran, which seemed unreasonable to the impoverished government in Moscow. (After the sale went through, the United States deployed the nuclear submarine USS *Topeka* in the Gulf in November to monitor the movements of Iran's new submarines.)

Iranian rearmament has already provoked growing fears about Iran's intentions among members of the administration of Bill Clinton that takes office this month. There have been reports of high-level meetings between Vice President-elect Albert Gore and members of the Iranian opposition *mujahedin*.⁷ Although none of this indicates panic in Washington, it highlights the concern with which the United States government, its conservative oil producer friends on the Arabian Peninsula, and even Israel regard Iran's antagonistic regional policies.

ALSO AN OLIVE BRANCH

Despite the provocative character of Iran's foreign policy toward the GCC countries, there is still the more constructive strain, seen mainly in Iran's dealings with its other, primarily non-Arab, neighbors. In recent months the Islamic Republic has made significant attempts to forge constructive and congenial ties with Turkey and Pakistan. Teheran has also mounted a campaign to win hearts and minds in the burgeoning Islamic states to the north that have only recently achieved political independence.

Iran's motives for improving relations with Turkey

⁵See the excellent article by Youssef M. Ibrahim, "Rebounding Iranians Are Striving for Regional Leadership," *The New York Times*, November 7, 1992, p. A1.

⁶See Elaine Sciolino, "C.I.A. Says Iran Makes Progress on Atom Bombs," *The New York Times*, November 30, 1992, p. A1.

⁷Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Iran Sizes Up Clinton," *Washington Post*, November 23, 1992, p. A21.

and Pakistan are easily understood. Turkey is particularly vital because of its close ties to the West, the independent character of its policies, and the avowedly non- (some would say anti-)Islamic tenor of its government. Should Ankara focus its displeasure on Iran, Teheran would confront a serious challenge. Pakistan is no less crucial to Iran, given its proximity to Afghanistan and India, as well as the decidedly Islamic thrust of its government. In light of Teheran's competition with Saudi Arabia for Islamic pre-eminence, links with Pakistan—which was the first modern Islamic state—are quite important.

Because of the tensions with its GCC neighbors, as well as the United States, it is incumbent on the Islamic Republic to strengthen ties everywhere it can. Last November the foreign ministers of Iran, Syria, and Turkey held a highly publicized meeting in Ankara to compare experiences and coordinate policies toward the Kurds. In a way, the Kurdish "problem" was merely a pretext on Iran's part to engage in cordial meetings and collaboration with two influential Middle Eastern states. Although Syrian-Iranian ties were strong during the Iran-Iraq War, Iran's relations with Turkey have historically been more spotty. But Ankara is exceedingly sensitive to attempts, either real or imagined, by its Kurdish minority to seek any degree of autonomy. Iran was able to support Turkey in this area of tremendous importance to President Ozal and his government (and to earn as well additional points in Syria). Undermining the Kurds, the Iranian thinking went, was a small price to pay to improve relations with Turkey.

Iran has made its efforts in former Soviet Central Asia a particularly high priority, and thus has caused much concern in Saudi Arabia. Riyadh feels that it should be the one to come to the rescue of the Central Asians, while at the same time helping them Islamicize in a constructive, conservative (non-Iranian) fashion. Iran prefers its own brand of Islam. As part of its Central Asian push, it founded the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which held its initial meeting in Teheran last February. Teheran created the group almost as a northern tier counterpart to the GCC, and persuaded Turkey, Pakistan, and the six new Islamic states north of the Caspian to join.

Although the initial ECO meeting offered flowery speeches, ample goodwill, and little of substance, it showed the importance Iran attaches to its effort in Central Asia. Should the states on its northern border

fall under the sway of countries unsympathetic to Iran, such as the United States (which is unlikely) or Saudi Arabia (only slightly more likely), Teheran would feel much as Moscow did when Turkey joined NATO and Washington did when Castro threw in his lot with the Soviets. If the Central Asians are skillful, they will prolong the bidding for their affections, lock up as much foreign aid as possible, and continue to go their own way. It is too early to predict the outcome of this seduction, but Iran's involvement is as legitimate as that of any of its competitors.

The ECO gathering in Teheran was soon followed by another meeting attended by Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan, which now comprise a new association of Persian-speaking countries. Iran, Turkey, and other non-Arab actors in the region are no less committed to pan-Arab-style political groupings than the Arabs themselves. Whether or not they realize the inefficacy of such pan-efforts is unclear.

Further evidence of Iran's commitment to conciliatory policies came last May when President Rafsanjani negotiated a brief cease-fire between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the war over the former's autonomous republic of Nagorno-Karabakh. Although the cease-fire failed to accomplish its objective, it is rare for an avowedly and stridently Islamic state like Iran to earn the trust of a non-Muslim state—Armenia—that is engaged in conflict with yet another Muslim state, Azerbaijan. The episode shows the sincerity of Iran's desire to become a regional power, as well as signaling where Iranian priorities lie. For although the Islamic north is important to Iran, oil revenues and power are found in proximity to the littoral states of the Persian Gulf to the south. The mixture of conciliation toward some and aggression toward others will continue in Iran's foreign policy. Given these trends, the Western countries, particularly the United States, might well think the unthinkable: improve relations with Iran, with an eye to promoting the restoration of full diplomatic relations in the not-too-distant future. Western policies geared to either ignoring the Islamic Republic or challenging it have failed, as have Iran's attempts to export its revolution. It is time for the West to accept the Iranian Revolution while nudging Teheran back into the global community where it belongs, and where, somewhat ironically, it will have to be more sensitive to world opinion than it is now. Bringing Iran back into the mainstream would present Teheran with its greatest challenge of all. ■

Since the Iraqi government's defeat in the Persian Gulf War, Kurdish leaders have struggled to create a state that will at the very least include them in determining Iraq's future. As regional powers keep a watchful eye on their progress, Kurds in neighboring Turkey, Iran, and Syria are also waiting to see if the dream of Kurdish autonomy almost realized twice in this century emerges or if the situation will become a lightning rod of controversy and conflict.

A Kurdish State in Iraq?

BY JAMES M. PRINCE

At the end of the Persian Gulf War, the world watched in horror as the Iraqi government brutally suppressed a Kurdish rebellion in northern Iraq and 1.8 million Kurds fled to Iran and Turkey. But the nature of Iraqi Kurdish society, combined with fear of a separate Kurdish state, paralyzed the coalition powers that had fought Iraq. Now it may be possible that the establishment in April 1991 of a "safe haven" for the Kurds in northern Iraq—a de facto Kurdish state—may for the first time protect these mountain people from the central government in Baghdad and break the tragic cycle of repression.

A HISTORY OF FALSE STARTS

The world first took note of the Indo-European Kurds in 400 B.C., when they massacred Xenophon's Ten Thousand. By the time of the Crusades the Kurds were known for their military nature, and for fighting among themselves and falling subject to others.¹ In modern times they achieved two short-lived semi-independent entities: the Kingdom of Kurdistan in Iraqi Kurdistan under Sheik Mahmoud (1922–1924), and the Mahabad Republic under Qazi Mohammed (January–December 1946), which is now Iranian Kurdistan.

Until recently, Americans who knew of the Kurds saw them as victims and objects of persecution: there was the rebellion of the mid-1970s, which collapsed when Iran withdrew support after striking a deal with Iraq; Baghdad's gassing of Kurdish villages in the late

1980s; and the failed uprising after the Gulf War in March 1991. The postwar exodus of Kurds, and the refugees' living conditions in the mountains between Iraq and Turkey, gained international attention for this nation of between 20 million and 25 million split among Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Syria, and Armenia—the largest ethnic group in the Near or Middle East without a homeland.

In mid-April 1991 the United States, Britain, France, and the Netherlands, acting on a plan first advanced by British Prime Minister John Major, created the safe haven north of the thirty-sixth parallel. With Operation Provide Comfort, coalition troops facilitated a massive Kurdish repatriation while squeezing out the Iraqi government's authority. When the last coalition soldier left northern Iraq on July 15, 1991, the 4 million to 5 million Iraqi Kurds controlled an area that comprised 80 percent of the predominantly Kurdish areas in Iraq. By the end of September all Kurdish-dominated areas in Iraq except the city of Kirkuk had come under local Kurdish control.

The Kurdish zone covers 36,000 square miles, running from the Tigris River in the west eastward to the border with Iran, and including the Cizre-Dohuk-Amadiya triangle that made up the original safe haven; it also extends along the Iranian border south to Halabja and west to Suleimaniya and Erbil. (More than one-quarter of the Iraqi Kurdish population, however, still lives outside Kurdistan.) The Kurds maintain a Western-supported de facto government in the region, supported by some 100,000 armed Kurdish fighters. The zone remains under the UN embargo of Iraq as well as an internal Iraqi blockade.

TOWARD A GOVERNMENT BY THE KURDS

On May 19, 1992, approximately 1 million Kurds waited in line for up to eight hours to cast their vote in the first free elections held in the state of Iraq. Thousands of armed guerrillas, or peshmerga ("those

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¹Philip G. Kreyenbroek and Stefan Sperl, *The Kurds: A Contemporary Overview* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

who face death”), temporarily abandoned positions opposite the Iraqi army in order to join the estimated 85 to 90 percent of eligible voters who took part. The choice in the election was among four candidates for leader of Iraqi Kurdistan and seven lists for members of a 105-seat National Assembly put forward by the eight political parties and the few tribal leaders of the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (IKF).² Despite allegations of minor irregularities, the elections were peaceful, and were considered fair by outside observers even though there was no electoral roll and no telephone communication between cities or computers to help in tallying the vote. Election laws promulgated by the IKF provided for a High Committee headed by a former Iraqi judge to oversee the balloting; in the event, the two main political parties orchestrated the elections, and they remain the centers of power in the Kurdish-dominated region of Iraq.

Traditionally, local power in northern Iraq had been wielded by the tribal chiefs, or *aghass*, and to a lesser degree by Muslim sheiks. However, the collapse of the Kurdish rebellion in 1975 and then the end of the Iran-Iraq War in 1988 ushered

in a period of self-examination. Intellectuals and midlevel commanders blamed the Kurdish leadership for provocative actions that led the Iraqi government to gas villages and conduct a massive relocation campaign in the 1980s. Others criticized the Kurds who fought alongside the Iranian army against pro-government Kurdish tribesmen.

In May 1988 eight major Kurdish parties formed the Iraqi Kurdistan Front to represent Kurdish interests.

²The Iraqi Kurdistan Front defines Kurdistan as the three governates of Suleimaniya, Arbil, and Dohuk, as well as the governate of Kirkuk and the cities of Sinjar, Khanakeen, Talafar, Jalawla, and Kifri.

The movement was funded mainly by levies on trucks traveling between Mosul or Baghdad and Turkey (this continues today as trucks pass through in violation of the UN-approved sanctions against Iraq following the invasion of Kuwait in 1990). Although the leaders of the front's parties were not the original impetus behind the 1991 uprising, they acted quickly to exploit the spreading popular rebellion. The IKF moved in to fill the political and civil administrative vacuum created by the central government's withdrawal from northern Iraq, at the expense of the traditional tribal leadership. The party leaders who sit on the IKF's Political Leadership Committee are now in the process of slowly ceding authority to the elected Kurdish parliament.

Political leadership is in the hands of the IKF Supreme Body, made up of two members of each party and chaired by the leaders of the two main parties, Jalal al-Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Masoud Barzani of the Kurdistan Democratic party (KDP).

Three of the front's seven original parties—the Party of Socialism in Kurdistan (PASOK), the Kurdistan Popular Democratic party (KPDP), and the

Kurdistan Socialist party—demand an independent state. The KDP and the PUK, which represent the vast majority of Iraqi Kurds, publicly support a “federated” Iraq and discount moves toward Kurdish independence. The KDP under Barzani and Talabani's PUK, however, have traditionally been at odds, with disputes focusing more on personal allegiances than clear political differences. Their rivalry has often degenerated into armed conflict.

The Kurdish Democratic party, the largest and oldest of the Kurdish parties, holds strong appeal for mountain Kurds who are the backbone of the Kurdish military forces. Since its founding in Iran in 1945, the party has been under the control of the Barzani family,



which hails from the area around the northern towns of Bahdinan and Kumanji. The founder, Mulla Mustafa al-Barzani, was the grandson of a prominent sheik, which allowed him to combine religious authority with secular tribal legitimacy, helped along by Mulla's own charisma.

After Mulla Mustafa's death in an American hospital in 1979, the KDP revived under his sons, Isri and Massoud. Massoud Barzani tends to view events through his father's eyes, particularly the exploitation of the Kurds and the false promises made by external powers. He remains essentially an unimposing traditional tribal leader who is uncomfortable electioneering or meeting the world leaders who abandoned his father. He continues to blame former United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger for his father's death in exile. Kissinger's comment on America's moral obligation to continue to support the Kurds—that there is a difference between covert action and missionary work—haunts Barzani. As recently as last July he refused to attend a meeting with Talabani that included Kissinger. The KDP leader believes that the international spotlight on the Kurds will dim and that lines of communication must be kept open with the power to be dealt with: Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Jalal Talabani, a lawyer and former member of the KDP political bureau from Iran, formed the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in Damascus in June 1975. Talabani, along with Ibrahim Ahmad, had provided the intellectual underpinnings of the KDP, but the two soon tired of Barzani and the traditional leadership. When Kurdish nationalists split in 1975 over Barzani's decision to abandon the struggle after the defeat of the rebellion, Talabani seized the chance to form his own party. The American political scientist David McDowall terms Talabani and Ahmad "urban leftists who wanted to build an ideological framework in which to foster a form of nationalism that would make tribal policies obsolete." Like the KDP, the Patriotic Union reflected the leftist influence of the Soviet Union, but its leaders' ideology and "consultative approach" were more attractive to the technocrats and the better educated among the Kurds. Talabani is well traveled and articulate, but tends to be volatile. And Mam ("Uncle") Jalal is also vulnerable, as Barzani once remarked, because he is "an agent for everybody."³

The PUK ultimately captured 43.8 percent of the vote in the elections, only 1.7 percent less than the KDP. Negotiations afterward led to an agreement under which the KDP heads the executive, with a prime minister from the PUK and cabinet slots divided equally between the two parties.

The founder and current secretary general of the Kurdistan Popular Democratic party, Mahmoud "Sami" Abdulrahman, was one of the first to call for a federated state system in Iraq, and for self-determination rather than autonomy (that Talabani began advocating a federal system years before Barzani was a major issue in last year's campaigning). Formerly an electrical engineer, Abdulrahman fled to Iran after the failure of the rebellion in 1975 and returned from exile to become one of the wealthiest businessmen in Kurdistan. He is recognized for his brilliance, but many accuse him of self-indulgence in his quest to break Barzani and Talabani's personal stranglehold on the political system.

The two socialist parties, the Kurdish Socialist party (KSP) and the Party of Socialism in Kurdistan (PASOK), both of which call for an independent Kurdish state, ran on the same ticket in the 1992 elections, garnering 2.6 percent of the total vote; they did not win any seats in parliament, since a party must receive 7 percent of the vote to be represented. A few months after the polling the parties merged with Abdulrahman's KPDP to form the Kurdistan Unity party, under the leadership of Abdulrahman and Mahmoud Osman.

The Islamic Party of Kurdistan, which believes that Iraq should become an Islamic state, captured 5.1 percent of the vote in the elections, and also sent no members to parliament; the northern branch of the Kurdish Communist party received 2.2 percent. The number of Christian Assyrians in northern Iraq is in dispute, but to forestall international criticism and local disapproval, the IKF allocated the Assyrian Democratic Movement five seats in parliament regardless of the party's electoral showing; theoretically, these are the swing votes in the body.

THE TRIBAL QUESTIONS

Since the death of Mulla Mustafa, the relationship between the traditional clan hierarchies and the political parties and their guerrilla fighters has been symbiotic. Barzani and Talabani portray the tribal leaders as Iraqis for hire. Their continuing secret talks with the Iraqi government make them suspect in the West, and they are ignored by coalition representatives in the area. Most of the policemen in northern Iraq and many of the wealthiest Kurds are members of prominent tribes. The tribes own vast tracts of land and are better educated than other Iraqi Kurds, given the financial and educational benefits that the Iraqi government denied members of Kurdish political parties.

In the 1970s, under the government of President Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr, the fighters of many tribes were organized into militias of between 3,000 and 5,000 members; these remained part of the regular Iraqi army until the March 1991 uprising. During the Iran-Iraq War, the "Jash" (a pejorative label meaning "little donkeys") helped hold the border area against Iran,

³All quotations in the paragraph are from David McDowall, *The Kurds: A Nation Denied* (London: Minority Human Rights Publications, 1992).

while Mulla Mustafa and the tribes fought each other and the KDP peshmerga joined with the Iranians in fighting the tribes. KDP leader Barzani was on better terms with Iran than with Iraq because of this willingness to fight other Kurds for Teheran, which alienated many of the pro-Iraqi government tribes in the border areas. Thus the major tribes maintain much better relations with PUK leader Talabani than with Barzani.

Some of the tribal leaders have claimed that the tribes began the 1991 uprising. The role of the tribes is unclear, but there is no doubt that tribal fighters refused to turn their guns on the local rebels. If their leaders had given orders to militarily oppose the uprising, the result could have been different—and much bloodier. The Jash were well armed, well organized, and—unlike the parties—maintained a permanent presence in the area.

Some of the 75 lesser tribes advocate the establishment of the historical Mosul Vilayet, with Iraq becoming a UN trust territory. (The idea of a Mosul Vilayet dates back to before World War I, when parts of the Ottoman Empire were divided up into vilayets.) The 75 tribes support the parliament of the Kurds but seek, through the vilayet, to restore their lost prestige and authority.

Tribal leaders are frustrated now as the parties push them off center stage, their past history and their disagreements with Talabani and Barzani blocking them from playing a major role in the opposition movement. The 7 percent threshold required for representation in parliament, combined with active discouragement from the parties, kept a second group of tribes from submitting its own list of candidates for the elections. The leaders of the largely independent tribal fiefdoms have not yet come to terms with the changed situation in northern Iraq. Many believe the Kurdish people will turn to them as traditional legitimacy wins out over the political populism that Western-supported party figures advocate. In September 1991 the leaders of 14 dissatisfied former pro-government tribes formed a political party, the as yet ineffective Kurdish Tribes Society.

THE US AND THE KURDS

Until last July, United States policy toward the Iraqi Kurds was based on benign neglect and political containment. In April 1988, Talabani had been received by the State Department's director of Northern Gulf affairs, Lawrence Pope. Pope did not clear a meeting with his superiors. The secretary of state, George Shultz, responded to a formal complaint from Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz by proscribing all contact with Iraqi dissidents.

Thinking that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait would change the American attitude toward the Kurds, Talabani visited Washington in mid-August 1990 and was again rebuffed by the State Department, despite per-

sonal appeals from congressional leaders; Washington feared that by according unknown opposition leaders legitimacy it would send the wrong message to the countries of the region. Only after the 1991 uprising and exodus, the hosting of Kurdish leaders by French, British, and Turkish leaders, and massive media criticism directed at the administration of President George Bush for its failure to support the Iraqi opposition, did the United States suggest that the Kurds might be afforded a meeting. The State Department unofficially conveyed specific prerequisites: the Kurdish delegation must be representative and must include all religious and sectarian opposition elements, and the Kurds must allay the fears of their neighbors, namely Turkey, that they harbored secessionist tendencies. The United States stated that it would not support any elements that had as their objective the balkanization of Iraq.

After the establishment of the safe haven, activists working out of London mounted an effort to gather the disparate opposition elements, including the Kurds, Islamists, and former supporters of the Baath party, into a single association. Talabani immediately joined the group that resulted, the International Committee for a Free Iraq, which subsequently evolved into the Iraqi National Congress (INC); Barzani, his suspicions roused by the Western support, was more hesitant. On December 27, 1990, Talabani and 16 other opposition leaders meeting in Damascus announced they had reached an agreement: for the first time, a major Kurdish leader and religious Shia leaders from southern Iraq proposed to work together, an arrangement that would have once been unthinkable. However, the committee was unable to gain the attention of the United States-led anti-Iraq coalition. The United States was afraid not only of Turkey but also of Iranian influence on the Shiite leaders, such as Bakir al-Hakim from the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq and the vehemently anti-West al-Dawa.

Taking United States concerns into account, Kurdish leaders paid lip service throughout the campaign for the May elections to the idea that Iraq's territorial integrity must be maintained. Speeches, press releases, and banners flying from rooftops and car antennas broadcast boilerplate slogans in support of freedom and territorial integrity and against Saddam Hussein that had been lifted verbatim from American policy statements. The United States State Department and military personnel maintained a low profile during the elections. American election monitors, including some congressional staff, were denied the visa exemption they needed to enter Iraq. That the election was a success surprised most in Washington and highlighted the lack of United States support.

A little over a month after the elections, the Iraqi National Congress gathered in Vienna after sending an

open invitation to all opposition groups.⁴ The congress is headed and financially and spiritually backed by the European-based Iraqi banker Ahmad al-Chalabi and his brother, Hassan al-Chalabi, a former University of Baghdad law professor whose students included Talabani. Barzani, who unlike Talabani questioned the depth of American support, refused to cut lines of communication with Baghdad by joining the opposition.

Unlike past convocations in Damascus and Beirut, the Vienna meeting did not erupt into fistfights. The group elected an eight-member delegation, including both Barzani and Talabani, that was to travel to Washington. The delegation waited for more than two weeks before receiving word it would be officially received at the Department of State; Secretary of State James Baker 3d overruled the department's Bureau of Near Eastern affairs, which had objected to the invitation. Baker felt the risk that the meeting would be perceived as support for the breakup of Iraq was minimal; moreover, the administration did not want to be seen refusing to back anti-Saddam elements during the height of the American presidential campaign.

Recalling the abrupt termination of United States support in 1974 and the misplaced hope that Bush would back an uprising after the Persian Gulf War, Barzani refused to leave Kurdistan. The day before the Iraqi National Congress delegation was to leave for Washington, Colonel Richard Wilson, the American commander of Operation Provide Comfort, and Fadhil Mirani, a KDP commander, finally persuaded Barzani to join the delegation, thereby scotching any chance of a negotiated settlement with Baghdad and again placing the Kurds' fate largely in the hands of American policymakers.

The July 1992 meetings in Washington were not only a watershed in United States policy toward the Kurds but also galvanized holdout elements of the Iraqi opposition to join this new coalition. The nationalists and Islamists of the Iraqi opposition, along with most Middle East observers, perceived the reception by the secretary of state as signaling American support for the new Kurdish government and for a prominent role for the Kurds in any Iraqi government after Saddam's ouster. Given such a commitment, only by aligning themselves with the well-connected Kurds—who maintained a Western-supported government on Iraqi soil supported by 100,000 armed fighters—could these exiled elements launch a coordinated attack on Baghdad.

Talabani became the outspoken leader of the opposition, with Ahmad Chalabi the movement's financial

driving force. However, Talabani continued to show his lack of experience in international diplomacy. For example, on the way to the United States, he mentioned to a Turkish reporter that the Kurds would not rule out a federal connection to a state other than Iraq—namely, Turkey. This interview aired as the Kurds were reaffirming their agreement with the United States policy of respecting the territorial integrity of Iraq.⁵

The months following the visit to Washington saw unprecedented coordination among the various Kurdish leaders. Parliament continued to quietly assume many government functions, Barzani discarded reservations about an alliance with the opposition and about Talabani's positions on a federated Iraq and the need to allay Turkish fears of Kurdish secession. He began negotiations with Turkey and the other Kurdish leaders on expelling the Turkish Kurdish Workers party (PKK), a Marxist Turkish group, from Iraqi territory. The KDP felt this major show of good faith to the Turks was the price to be paid for Turkey's acquiescence to the de facto Kurdish state. Disarming the Turkish party also would halt Turkish military reprisals on KDP-controlled border territory.

Barzani feels personal animosity toward Osman Ocalan, the PKK leader, who attacks tribalism and the traditional Kurdish cultural identity. After several warnings to the Turkish Kurds, the Kurdish parliament voted last October 4 that the PKK peshmerga must leave Iraq voluntarily or be removed by force. Fighting broke out the next day. This move by the PUK and the KDP peshmerga was not popular among the smaller parties, especially the socialists. The campaign also drove a larger wedge between the parties and the tribal leaders, some of whom served as a conduit between Baghdad and the PKK. Other tribes, however, including the Bandost, participated in the fighting against the Turkish rebels.

The organizations that had previously decried Kurdish aspirations now formally recognized the Kurdish lead and resolved to join the Iraqi National Congress, despite the decision by the Kurdish parliament a few weeks earlier to advocate the creation of a Kurdish state federated to the rest of Iraq. At a preliminary INC meeting in September 1992, federalism was not formally considered, despite being the most contentious issue—aside from the election of a leadership—facing the disparate coalition. The Islamic groups based in Iran, primarily the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, and al-Dawa and the Arab nationalists from Syria and Saudi Arabia were under orders to oppose the balkanization of Iraq. However, after two days of heated debate they voted overwhelmingly to "respect" Kurdish aspirations. Interestingly, the Sunni and Arab nationalists were the last holdouts against federalism. (One pro-federalization delegate to the conference called federalism a marriage between Iraqis.

⁴The other main opposition coalition is the Joint Action Committee, which is comprised mostly of Syrian- and Iranian-based groups.

⁵"Border Wars," *The Economist*, September 5, 1992, p. 46.

Many on all sides wonder if such a marriage could endure given past animosities.)

The unprecedented conference closed with a marathon 20-hour meeting that included a scuffle during the debate over staffing of the Leadership Council. The Kurdish proposal for a collective leadership of three including a Shia Muslim, a Sunni Muslim, and a Kurd, elicited a violent protest from the Shias, who felt underrepresented. However, the other representatives recognized, in private, that they must join with the Kurds to garner international legitimacy and the logistical support needed to establish a viable opposition. Only the Kurds control some Iraqi territory, have elected a government, and have met a United States secretary of state. Other exile organizations also see the United States as having an interest in and affinity for the Kurds, and the Kurdish leadership does nothing to dissuade this overestimation of the American commitment.

Talabani, recognizing his tendency toward volatility and his failure to command Barzani's respect, graciously nominated the latter for one of the three posts on the Leadership Council. The other leadership positions went to Mohammed Bahr al-Ulum, a Shia cleric with no organizational backing, and Hassan al-Naqib, a Sunni and former Iraqi general.

THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND

Iraqi Kurdistan is slowly recuperating from Baghdad's massive relocation and genocidal campaign of the late 1980s, as well as the effects of the 1991 rebellion and the subsequent flight of the Kurds. The infrastructure and civil administration are well on the way to reaching the level they had attained before the rebellion. But approximately 50,000 Kurds remain displaced and homeless. Tens of thousands more have returned to the sites of their old villages and are attempting to rebuild many of the 5,000 communities

destroyed by the army during the 1980s. Local leaders are increasingly turning to the political parties for financial and political sustenance as they undertake this effort.

The international embargo against Iraq and the Iraqi blockade of the north preclude significant economic activity in the region. The surplus from this year's harvest could not be exported, and the vast majority of factories, including the large cigarette factory at Suleimaniya, cannot operate because they lack spare parts. Hundreds of Kurds will probably die this winter from cold and hunger caused by a shortage of fuel, and villagers will chop down valuable trees, causing deforestation that will make future winters harder. Economically, the landlocked region cannot exist independently without an outlet through Syria, Iran, or Turkey, all of which seem to be moving toward a more antagonistic stance toward an Iraqi Kurdistan.

In the midst of the INC conference, Talabani announced that the Turkish army had moved tanks and ground troops into northern Iraq to attack the PKK; over 20,000 soldiers had surrounded the lightly armed PKK fighters in the Hakurk region and outside the city of Zakho. Domestic anxiety in Turkey combined with a fear that disarmed PKK "terrorists" could regroup drove the decision to "finish off" the PKK. Ankara has played up the degree of hostilities in order to justify the incursion, and maintains the capability to eradicate the PKK presence across the border. The worry vexing the Iraqi Kurds is whether the Turks, having exercised that military capability, would leave Iraq, or go on to exploit the situation and further pressure the Iraqi Kurds to abandon any hope of increased autonomy from Baghdad. The incursion proved a timely reminder that the situation in northern Iraq is determined by the same external powers that have controlled Kurdish destiny since 1614. ■

"Although the Syrian government likes to point to the stability it has achieved—22 years of government by one man, and 30 years of Baathist rule—such stability is close to stagnation. . . . The main challenge facing the regime does not come from its neighbors, from its regional environment, or from its bourgeoisie. It comes instead from within—from the regime's own inability to renew itself by broadening instead of concentrating its sources of support."

Incremental Change in Syria

BY VOLKER PERTHES

Syria's participation in the coalition that defeated Iraq in the 1991 Persian Gulf War and its involvement in the Middle East peace talks have been widely regarded as signs of a major reorientation of Syrian politics. There have also been shifts in the country's military capability, economic policy, and political discourse. All of these have been influenced by changes on the international scene—namely the loss of the country's main international ally, the Soviet Union. Syria has coped with these developments relatively well, partly because regional developments have been favorable. However, there are important constants in the policies pursued by Damascus. Internally, economic liberalization has been speeded up without substantial political liberalization: the regime, though exchanging its sociopolitical bases for forces that are more favorable for its current regional and foreign policies, has resisted demands for democratization and political reform.

WHY SYRIA AGREED TO THE NEGOTIATIONS

In the summer of 1991, the Syrian government accepted a joint invitation from the United States and the Soviet Union to participate in a United States-sponsored Middle East peace conference to be held in Madrid that October and November. By November 1992, Syria and Israel had held seven rounds of direct, bilateral negotiations. Though no concrete results have been achieved, the negotiations between the two main contenders in the Arab-Israeli conflict are a confidence-building measure and thus a step toward a peaceful solution.

Syria's participation in these talks represents a partial revision of its approach toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. Previously the Syrian government had insisted that Arab-Israeli negotiations should take place under United Nations sponsorship, and that they could only be multilateral, with a joint Arab delegation confronting the Israeli delegation. Syria had also insisted that before peace talks were held, Israel should withdraw from territories occupied since the 1967 Six Day War.

By taking part in the peace process, Damascus has compromised on its first condition by agreeing to a multilateral framework for virtually bilateral negotiations. It has also given up the second—that UN Resolutions 242 and 338, both demanding the withdrawal of Israel from the Arab territories occupied in 1967—provide the basis for any peace negotiations.

Syria's decision to engage in a peace process with Israel did not come unexpectedly. Since Hafez Assad took power in a 1970 coup, the Syrian leadership has given Syrian national interests and the basic interest of maintaining power clear priority over pan-Arab considerations, including the Palestinian cause. While these tenets remained ideologically valid, they did not act as guidelines for concrete policy moves. In the conflict with Israel, Syria accepted UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as early as 1973, and has been criticized for this by the more radical Arab states and factions. Syria's acceptance of these resolutions meant that it considered a negotiated solution a possibility.

A military solution, however, was not excluded and was regarded throughout the 1970s as the more probable outcome. Syria's national security doctrine called on the Arab states confronting Israel to achieve what was called strategic parity with the "enemy"; this would enable the Arabs either to strike militarily or to confront Israel in negotiations from a position of strength. In 1979, when Egypt, Syria's partner in the 1973 October War, signed a peace treaty with Israel, Syria altered its security doctrine to achieve strategic

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parity alone. This demanded enormous efforts to strengthen Syria's military capabilities.

The 1982 defeat in Lebanon of Syrian forces by the Israeli army demonstrated how far Syria was from reaching this goal. Syria made up for its 1982 losses with Soviet help, but strategic parity with Israel could only be achieved—if at all—after further costly efforts. The Syrian leadership realized that the Soviet Union was not prepared to support such efforts indefinitely, and the Soviet Union's gradual withdrawal from world politics made it clear that Syria would have to come to terms with the West to gain a favorable deal in a negotiated solution. The goal of strategic parity was silently abandoned.

The 1990 Persian Gulf crisis gave the Syrian leadership the opportunity to take sides with the West at a moment when the United States needed Arab political support. Assad had no doubts that he would stand with the winners. When the United States launched its initiative for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict at the end of the Persian Gulf War, Syria's regional political position had improved. Militarily it was weaker because of the rapid deterioration of the Soviet Union; Syria could no longer count on the provisions of the Syrian-Soviet friendship treaty of 1980, which guaranteed Soviet military support in case of direct aggression against Syria. Syria's president thus decided to accept the invitation to Madrid—even before the Israelis did.

SYRIAN STRATEGY AT THE TALKS

Syria's negotiating position at the Middle East peace talks is based on two principles. The first is coordination between the so called "collar states" (*duwwal al-tauq*)—Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestine Liberation Organization—before and during each round of the talks to make up for the bilateral nature of the negotiations. (In this context, Syria's relations with the PLO, which had been extremely strained since 1983, have improved considerably.) Partial solutions in the peace process are no longer to be excluded—the Israeli goal is clearly to come to separate agreements with each Arab delegation. It is inconceivable, however, that Syria would conclude a full peace treaty with Israel before a comprehensive solution was in sight, including an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and a West Bank and Gaza settlement acceptable to Jordan and the Palestinian delegation.

The second principle is Syria's claim to the Golan Heights. Damascus sees no reason to give up its internationally acknowledged legal position that the Golan is entirely Syrian. Syria will not come to an agreement with Israel unless the latter renounces its claim to the area and agrees to a significant withdrawal that would, at least, return Syrian villages in the Golan to Syrian authority. Syria has, however, accepted that its own troops will not return to the western parts of

the Golan Heights that overlook Lake Tiberias. The Syrian government has made that clear by approving the idea of a large demilitarized zone in the Golan after an Israeli withdrawal and the area is returned to Syrian authority. Negotiations may drag on for some time, but the new Labor government's belief that the Golan is negotiable has set the course for a Syrian-Israeli agreement.

Syria's relations with other Arab states have also undergone positive changes. Since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Egypt in late 1989, Syrian-Egyptian relations have become almost the centerpiece of Syria's Arab politics. The countries' relationship gained special importance during the Gulf crisis and war. Through their cooperation the two—the only non-Gulf Arab states of importance that unreservedly supported Kuwait and Saudi Arabia—were able to dominate decision making in the Arab League. Syria's stance during the Gulf crisis has occasionally been interpreted as being the result of the personal enmity between Assad and Saddam Hussein. Relations between Syria and Iraq have been strained since different wings of the Arab Socialist Baath (Renaissance) party came to power in Syria and Iraq in 1966 and 1968, respectively. However, Syria's strong relations with Saudi Arabia and, to a lesser extent, Kuwait, and its interest in maintaining and improving these relations, weighed more heavily on Syria's decision to support the Gulf monarchies than any strain in its bilateral relations with Iraq.

Since the Gulf War, Syria and Egypt have closely coordinated policies and have held frequent summits. A division of labor of sorts has been established between them: Egypt has evidently taken on a decisive role in determining policies toward the Gulf Arab states, while Syria has Egyptian support for its strategy in the Arab-Israeli conflict and its policy in Lebanon. Egypt has larger interests in the Gulf than Syria, both in regard to its potential role as a protective force and the number of Egyptian laborers working, or available to work, in the Gulf countries. For Syria, Lebanon and the conflict with Israel are paramount.

The main focus for Egyptian-Syrian coordination since the Gulf war has been relations with the Gulf monarchies. On March 6, 1992, the so-called Damascus Accord was signed by the six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman—and Egypt and Syria. This accord calls for the members' cooperation and coordination in political, economic, and defense matters. The accord was of particular significance because it established an exclusive inter-Arab alliance of the wealthiest and—after the Iraqi defeat—the strongest states in the Arab system with the intention of trading military support and protection for economic assistance. Egypt and Syria were initially interested in keeping some of their troops

in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, both in order to gain economically and to keep foreign powers out.

When the euphoria following the victory over Iraq had faded, the oil monarchies, Kuwait in particular, became uneasy about having to rely on the protection of Arab forces that could develop into ambitious centers of power inside their countries, perhaps probably even striking alliances with anti-regime forces. The Gulf monarchies preferred to diversify and "westernize" their alliances, concluding bilateral defense treaties with the United States, France, and Great Britain. As a result, talks about the implementation of the military component of the Damascus Accord dragged on inconclusively. Also, a project announced by the Gulf monarchies in April 1991 to set up a \$10-billion fund for financing development projects in Egypt and Syria has not materialized. The two countries did gain substantial bilateral financial aid from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Thus in Syria, Gulf financing has been provided for urgent infrastructural projects (namely an overhaul of the country's telephone network, the construction of new sewage systems for its four largest cities, and for arms shipments).

Syria's pro-Western position during the Gulf war has also helped Syria consolidate its position in Lebanon—that is, winning United States and, in general, international acceptance of having a dominant word in Lebanese politics. A treaty of "Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination" signed by Lebanon and Syria in May 1991, and a follow-up treaty on security ensure that Lebanon virtually accedes to Syrian wishes in foreign relations as well as external and internal security. Important decisions, such as the formation of cabinets, are discussed with the Syrian leadership beforehand. Syrian officials are even able to meddle in day-to-day Lebanese politics, occasionally acting as a referee of sorts between various Lebanese factions.

REFORMING THE ECONOMY

The Syrian government has intensified and speeded up its economic reform program. In the mid-1980s, the Syrian leadership had a gradual economic liberalization program in order to overcome a deep economic and foreign-exchange crisis. This crisis stemmed from development policies in the 1970s and early 1980s that discouraged agriculture and private manufacturing yet saw the creation of a large, heavily bureaucratized public industrial sector; government policies pushed private capital into commercial and speculative ventures or drove it out of the country.

By 1990 the government had substantially reduced consumer subsidies, devalued the national currency, gave exporters greater freedom to use their foreign-exchange income for imports of their choice, relaxed central control of agriculture, and raised government procurement prices for agricultural products. In 1991,

a new investment law was passed that decisively broadened the sphere of economic liberalization by allowing foreign investment in Syria without any restrictions and encouraging them through tax breaks and far-reaching exemptions from customs and currency provisions. In 1992, a law establishing an official market for company shares was being drafted, and a government committee was created to study Syria's unprofitable public sector and to develop proposals for its reform or partial liquidation.

The process of economic restructuring has been gradual, which has ensured government control of the process and its ability to cope with the expected difficulties and resistance. Nevertheless, this gradual liberalization has reduced the Syrian regime's ability to effectively lead and control the country's development. At the same time, the importance of Syria's new commercial and industrial bourgeoisie has increased; parts of the business quarter have gained some influence over economic policymaking and the country's discourse on economic policies is increasingly dominated by the business community.

With increased oil revenues (in 1992, Syria's oil production was more than 500,000 barrels per day, roughly half of which is exported.), substantial Gulf aid, and a booming, though not necessarily productive private sector have made Syria's general economic situation look considerably better than it did during the 1980s. Shops throughout the country are filled with consumer goods that were unavailable some years before. This is an important factor in generating public acceptance for a regime that has lacked popular support throughout the last decade. At the same time, only a small part of the population can afford most of the goods displayed. The income gap in Syria expanded dramatically during the 1980s; some 65 percent of the people are estimated to live below the poverty line, many of them—state employees, public sector workers, landless peasants—part of the traditional support base of the ruling Baath party.

LIMITS TO CHANGE

Syria's recent political course represents the attempt to liberalize economically without liberalizing politically. The Syrian leadership has not been prepared to loosen its tight grip on society, and nothing indicates any improvement in popular participation, let alone any eastern European- or, to take a regional example, Jordanian-style democratization. Instead, there has been a partial remodeling of the regime's basis. The role of the Baath party, which, according to the Syrian constitution of 1973, is "the leading party in state and society," has been curtailed. The party was conspicuously absent during the run-up to the referendum on President Assad's re-election in 1991. A party congress has not been convened since 1985, although one is to take place every five years. And, because circumstances

have changed tremendously, Syria's current foreign and economic policies have little to do with the policy decisions of the last party congress.

The circumscription of the party's role has not included greater pluralization. The smaller and insignificant socialist, Communist, and Nasserist parties allied with the Baath in a so-called "Progressive National Front" are not even allowed to distribute their own publications. There are no legal parties outside the Front, and a party law is not in sight. In the 1990 parliamentary elections, only 80 out of 250 seats were reserved for individual, independent candidates. The Baath and its allies thus retained a two-thirds majority to guard against the possibility of an ambitious independent bloc, yet they realized that the regime might dispense with them and create for itself a new, independent basis. The independent deputies elected represented mainly three groups: traditional (tribal and religious) leaders, the educated urban middle class, and the new commercial bourgeoisie.

The new parliament demonstrated its loyalty to President Assad much in the way a purely Baathist chamber would have done: in November 1991, the parliament decided unanimously to nominate Assad for a fourth presidential term of office. A month later, he was duly elected by popular referendum, receiving, according to official figures, 99.98 percent of the votes. The referendum campaign underlined the slightly revised government Assad was about to establish. The role of the party was limited, whereas great importance was given to demonstrations of loyalty by the masses, independent personalities, and corporative organizations such as the Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The regime also attempted to spread the idea that there is a personal bond between Assad and the people.

This notion, of course, legitimates a highly authoritarian power structure: effective power is largely vested in the president who personally supervises foreign policy, all security matters and oil policy. The government is directly responsible to the president; no important decisions can be made without his consent. Since the 1990 elections, parliament has been accorded a higher status, but it has not gained more actual power. No bills have been proposed by parliament yet, occasionally critical discussions have not been published by the government-controlled press, and deputies in reality do not even have the power to control or alter the budget.

Reserving a larger number of parliamentary seats for independents was seen as a way of incorporating them into the regime and giving them an advisory function rather than delivering to them a slice of power. This became evident when the new cabinet was formed in June 1992. Contrary to expectations, new faces from the parliament or from the business community did not appear; the cabinet remained very much what it was: a cabinet of state employees and functionaries to

which provincial governors, deputy ministers, and directors of public sector companies were promoted.

The inclusion of nonparty, independent personalities and corporations—particularly from the business community—and the limitation of the role of the party, go along well with the changes that occurred in Syria's foreign-policy orientation and economic policy. The Baath party largely represents those who are, or are supposed to be, critical of the policy reorientation in these spheres. Socially, the Baath represents the bureaucracy and the public sector, the quarters most threatened by limited government control of the economy. The party has already undergone a process of de-ideologization since Assad took power, and has to a large extent been transformed into a patronage network and an agency for the personality cult around the president. However, it still contains an element of socialist orientation, suspicion of the bourgeoisie and Western economic domination and, at the same time, an element of Arab nationalism that is not in favor of a peace treaty with Israel.

Ironically, opposition to Assad's stance in the Gulf War and his preparedness to make peace with Israel has been greatest in the party that rules the country. Independents and the business sector are in favor of not only the country's economic opening, but also establishing peace with Israel. Syria does not have much to fear economically from the integration of Israel into its Arab environment; businessmen, particularly in Damascus, regard peace as an opportunity to regain some of Syria's traditional Palestinian markets.

From this angle, Assad's politics are consistent. The attempt to liberalize economically without liberalizing politically is an experiment that may have its own limitations as far as the aspirations of the urban middle classes, hoping for some Syrian-style perestroika at least, and the official interest in attracting investors, are concerned. Foreign or Syrian expatriate investors are not likely to insist on democracy, but they would certainly appreciate the ability to send and receive their faxes uncensored, to expand their influence over economic policymaking, and to have some guarantees of political stability—especially if they contemplate long-term investments in the country.

Although the Syrian government likes to point to the stability it has achieved—22 years of government by one man, and 30 years of Baathist rule—such stability is close to stagnation. With the limiting of the ruling party's role, and the boundaries put on the development of alternative political forces, a new generation of leaders has not been able to develop. The main challenge facing the regime does not come from its neighbors, from its regional environment, or from its bourgeoisie. It comes instead from within—from the regime's own inability to renew itself by broadening instead of concentrating its sources of support. ■

"To paraphrase former Foreign Minister Abba Eban, instead of a tunnel at the end of the light for [Yitzhak] Shamir's government, there is a bright light of hope at the end of the tunnel [for the new Labor government of Yitzhak Rabin]. The government, however, has yet to reach it."

Labor's Return to Power in Israel

BY GIDEON DORON

The Israeli election held last June reinstated Labor in its traditional position as the country's largest centrist party and the core of every potential coalition. It also completed Yitzhak Rabin's 15-year comeback, as he again assumed the prime minister-ship.

Labor's decades of political domination had ended with the largely unexpected "turnabout" of power in the May 1977 election, which brought to power the right-wing Likud bloc. This political shift and the one last year were caused by marginal changes in electoral support. In 1977 Likud increased its strength in the 120-member Knesset by a mere 3 seats over the 39 it had won in the previous election. In 1992 Labor took 44 seats, only 5 more than in 1988. Yet the political and policy implications of both shifts were far-reaching, so long as the winners' coalitions were not outmatched by the losers'.

Likud's defeat last year can be traced to its inability to provide the leadership or practical solutions for dealing with Israel's mounting social and economic problems, or to adjust to the new international climate. A second factor was the replacement of the Labor leader, Shimon Peres—a four-time loser in electoral bids against Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir of Likud—by Yitzhak Rabin, who served as prime minister from 1974 to 1977 and as defense minister from 1984 to 1990. His personality, his position on the political spectrum, and the security myth he represents in the Israeli collective memory evidently made the difference at the polls.

GOVERNING PAINS

The Israeli political system often makes the task of governing extremely difficult. While elections are required by law to be held every four years, the interval is

often shorter, whether due to government crises or political calculations. The country constitutes a single electoral zone. Voters support party lists of candidates, chosen according to various nominating procedures: some parties' leaders personally select candidates while other parties' centers perform that function. Last year Labor began choosing its Knesset candidates through primaries in which all party members are eligible to participate. Competition among candidates over their placement on the party list is intense, since the higher one's name is on the list the more likely one is to gain office.

Knesset seats are assigned to parties in proportion to their percentage of the popular vote. The method used since 1974 for assigning seats favors large parties at the expense of small ones. The laws that regulate elections are perceived as establishing low entry barriers to the Knesset, and thus encourage many individuals to run and many groups to try for at least one seat. The number of parties competing in elections has ranged from 14 in 1961 to 31 in 1981; at least 20 parties have competed in every election since 1974. Since 1949, when Israel held its first popular elections, no party has been able to obtain a majority in parliament. Labor came closest in 1969; together with its affiliated Arab parties it took 60 seats in the Knesset.

The many parties and their continuing inability to attract a majority of voters entail the formation of coalition governments. Until 1977 Labor was the dominant party since its size and its location at the center of the political map enabled it to form coalitions with parties on its left (for example, the United Workers party, or Mapam) and on its right (the General Zionists and/or the Progressive party). The National Religious party (Mafdal) participated in every Labor coalition until 1977, but this historical alliance ended when Rabin made a security-related decision that antagonized the religious members of his government. The coalition consequently lost its majority in the Knesset, new elections were scheduled, and Rabin relinquished the leadership of the party to Peres.

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In 1977 allegations of personal corruption against Labor party members disillusioned voters; in addition, a new party, the Democratic Movement for Change, attracted many traditional Labor supporters who could not forgive Labor for its performance during the 1973 October War. Likud assumed power and ruled with support from the religious parties and the DMC. By 1981, when the DMC was dissolved and many Labor voters returned to the party, the political system had been transformed into a two-headed structure. Likud and Labor were now almost equal in size, and the political camps consisting of the small parties aligned with one or the other major party were also similar in size. As a result, since 1984 electoral competition has been over a winning bloc of potential coalition partners rather than about winning the popular contest.

Because the Labor-led left bloc tied with the Likud-led right-religious bloc in 1984, a grand coalition was formed from the two major and various small parties. This coalition was formed again in 1988 but, unsurprisingly, came apart in 1990. All grand coalitions, especially those not formed in response to an internal crisis or an external threat to the survival of the system; develop severe governability troubles. Their all-inclusive nature requires frequent compromise on basic ideological positions; also, the distribution of political payoffs in the form of ministerial posts is more attractive, and hence more efficient, in a smaller formation. As it turned out, leaders of the two largest parties continuously undermined policy initiatives undertaken by their ideological rivals turned partners. The government stalemated, and grass-roots movements began to propose structural alterations in the system aimed at unlocking the process.

By 1990 only three people among the top leadership of the two main parties seemed unaffected by the growing demand for change. These were Shamir, Rabin, and Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, who could do no better for themselves in an alternative coalition formation. Others began to plot a government crisis. Peres, then the finance minister, hoped to become prime minister; David Levy, Ariel Sharon, and Yitzhak Modai, three powerful figures in Likud, aspired to move from their minor ministerial positions to the front row. As a result of their activities, the government collapsed in March 1990. Three months later Shamir prevailed as the head of a coalition with a slim parliamentary majority consisting of all the right-wing and religious parties.

LIKUD'S ROAD TO FAILURE

There may be much truth in the observation that challengers do not win elections, incumbents lose them. Once the new Shamir government was formed, it seemed that Likud domination would be long-lived. Everything seemed to work in Likud's favor. First, and perhaps most important, a huge wave of Jewish

immigrants began pouring in from the Soviet Union, bringing close to 400,000 people to Israel. In addition, several thousand Ethiopian Jews were secretly airlifted into the country—a definite boost to Israeli spirit and morale. These new arrivals helped increase Israel's Jewish population by more than 10 percent in just two years.

The government took complete credit for this fulfillment of the Zionist goal of gathering world Jewry into the Jews' historical homeland. Moreover, the newcomers could potentially contribute to the expansion of the economy, in the long if not the short run; provide extra manpower that could be directed toward settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and, not least significant from the party's standpoint, vote Likud in future elections. This last expectation was based on the premise that new immigrants, lacking resources when they arrive, tend to depend on government for housing, jobs, and welfare, and to reward the governing party at the ballot box.

Second, Israel's position in the international arena improved dramatically in 1991. The West viewed the government's decision—or indecision—to remain passive during the Persian Gulf War while absorbing the psychological and material costs of the Iraqi bombardment as a noble act; the Israeli people were seen as bearing up bravely under the threat of Scud missiles. Relations with the United States and the European Community improved. Israel was able to establish diplomatic ties with the emerging countries of the former Soviet Union, and to reestablish ones with eastern European and African states.

The government's position on the Arab-Israeli conflict also seemed to be better understood by the West after the Gulf War. The traditional positions of Israel's foes had been undermined: the demands of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Jordan, which sided with Iraq during the war, were largely discredited, and Syria, a member of the United States-led coalition that drove Iraqi troops out of Kuwait, was forced to modify its stance because it could no longer rely on Soviet support. Avenues for peace efforts had opened. Following an American initiative, and after taking care of some domestic difficulties, the regional antagonists convened in Madrid in October 1991 for peace talks.

Last but not least, the Labor party was in complete disarray. Deprived of real power, most Labor members in the Knesset wanted to replace Peres with Rabin as their leader, but they underestimated Peres's strength among the rank and file of the party's center. When the center convened in July 1990, Peres was able to hold off the opposition behind Rabin. By the end of the year most polls predicted a decisive loss for Labor in the general election.

All this engendered overconfidence among senior Likud politicians, and disregard for public opinion

both in Israel and abroad. It even led to a lack of responsiveness to the demands of loyal Likud supporters. The party began doing things to defeat itself.

While the economy was efficiently run to suppress inflation (no inflation was recorded by June 1992), Likud's other economic priorities were hotly debated. Billions of dollars were diverted to build housing in the West Bank, and not enough was allocated for investment in new jobs. Unemployment soared: by last April over 12 percent of the adult population was jobless. This included one out of every two new immigrants, military veterans, residents of developing towns—Likud's traditional power bases—and about one-quarter of Israeli Arabs. Education, communications, and other social infrastructure also suffered from lack of investment.

Supported by the right-wing extremists in his party and the government, Shamir continued to defy United States requests for flexibility and compromise on the occupied territories. A request for a temporary halt in the building of new settlements in the territories was met with construction on a large scale. This severely strained the relationship between the two administrations and raised questions about Israel's ability to withstand regional opposition without the economic, diplomatic, and military assistance of the United States.

For a variety of personal and organizational reasons, Shamir and Likud were unwilling to bow to popular demands to alter the electoral system and introduce some measure of individual political accountability. Likud had been the first to democratize its nominating procedures in the 1970s, but in 1990–1992 its responsive instincts seemed to freeze. Moreover, Likud did not comply with the law that prohibited party center members from holding top public service positions and seats on the boards of state-owned companies. To cap it all, last April the highly respected state comptroller, Miriam Ben-Porth, released a report severely critical of Likud, specifically accusing housing ministry staff of personal and bureaucratic corruption.

The government also failed to come up with satisfactory solutions to security problems. Its efforts to defuse the intifada, or Palestinian civil uprising, proved relatively successful, and once the peace talks opened in Madrid low-intensity conflict was presumably also in the interest of the PLO leadership. However, several random acts of terror by Palestinians, directed against both children and adults, horrified the public; one in particular, which occurred last May in the Tel Aviv suburb of Bat Yam, significantly changed the political mood. Not only was the government blamed for not providing sufficient protection, but local residents in Bat Yam and other Likud strongholds turned to Rabin; in earlier rounds of the election, Labor representatives had not even been able to enter many of these areas.

Still, the cumulative effect of all these factors was not enough to guarantee a win for Labor and loss for Likud at the polls. In the elections of 1981 and 1984, aided by messages aimed at nationalists and by election-year economic strategy, Likud had been able to come from far behind and squeak by its arch-rival. In 1992 this did not happen, and party leaders must bear much of the blame. Events in the Likud center during the selection of the Knesset list in May are a case in point.

Likud consists of three main factions, the largest controlled by Shamir and Arens and the smallest by Sharon; collusion between these two assures a majority among center members. The two therefore have the ability to withhold power positions from members of the third faction, headed by David Levy. Levy, the symbolic leader of the Oriental Jews, was able to secure a place in the top leadership for himself, but not for any of his people; consequently, he lacked the incentive to campaign for the party this time around. Allegations of ethnic discrimination, directed against Labor in earlier elections, were now aimed at the Ashkenazim (eastern European Jews) of Likud. Indeed, on election day some of the Oriental Jews lent their support to Rabin—a shift that in itself was sufficient to ensure a Labor victory.

RABIN'S ROAD HOME

In the electoral game between the two main parties and their affiliated blocs of small parties, Rabin's reappearance as the Labor front-runner made a decisive difference. Although politicians and experts had long predicted the former prime minister's return to the top job, Rabin faced some serious obstacles on the road back.

The most immediate one was Peres, who had bested Rabin in their confrontation at the party center in 1990. Because of Peres's strength among the general electorate, and in tune with the public desire for electoral change and democratization, the secretary general of the party, Micha Harish, helped by Rabin's people, moved to institute a two-step primary system: the head of the party list would be elected in the first step, and those to stand for seats in the Knesset in the second. The assumption here, of course, was that Rabin was more popular than Peres among party voters.

About 100,000 party members voted in the primaries, held last February. Four candidates competed in the first phase, of whom Rabin placed first, barely edging out Peres. In the second phase Peres received the most votes, securing second position on the list of Knesset candidates. It was time for Rabin to overcome the next obstacle, and beat Likud and its allied parties in the general election.

The primaries focused the attention of the mass media and the public on Rabin. All polls indicated that in a head-to-head competition Rabin would prevail against any possible Likud candidate; however, if

Labor as a party had to face Likud, Labor would lose. This called for a campaign strategy that emphasized Rabin and deemphasized the role of the party—and especially that of Peres and his people within the party. In other words, what was required was an American-style presidential campaign centered around the candidate.

In an effort to make the party recede, symbols of Labor's traditional socialist orientation were removed; even the red flags and logo were replaced with "nationalist" blue. Peres was permitted to show his face only once in a political television commercial, while Rabin appeared every day, sometimes two or three times. Pictures of the new leader—and him only—popped up everywhere. Rabin was quick to alter his public lingo, switching from "we" to the charismatic "I" ("I promise," "I am responsible," "I shall change," and so on). Most significant, the party's official name was changed, to "Ha'ahvoda Bereshut Itzhak Rabin" ("Labor headed by Yitzhak Rabin"). The principal campaign slogan and jingle ran "Israel Mechaka Le'Rabin" ("Israel is waiting for Rabin") and "Rabin Ha'Tikva Ha'Yechida" ("Rabin is the only hope").

Some substance was required as well. On the security issue—where Likud enjoyed a relative advantage—Rabin proposed a distinction between political and security settlements in the occupied territories. This is in effect a modified form of a plan proposed in 1967 by Yigal Allon, the former Israeli foreign minister and Rabin's mentor, which called for Israeli maintenance of a security belt around the West Bank and the return of the rest of the territory to Jordan. Now Rabin suggested that a broader security zone surround the area over which resident Palestinians would have autonomy. The Gaza Strip would be part of this plan, but the Golan Heights would remain under Israeli control. The public's view of Rabin as the country's foremost security expert—and one who had proved not to be shy about employing harsh measures against the Palestinians during the intifada—lent credence to his new security plan.

On the economic and social fronts, Rabin pledged "a change in the order of national priorities." Part and parcel of this was the redirection of funds from "useless political settlements" in the occupied territories to investment in economic and social programs. Real solutions would thus become possible for unemployment and the absorption of immigrants, and for the country's deteriorating educational, health, and transportation systems, among other prevailing concerns. The \$10-billion loan guarantees that Likud had been denied by the administration of United States President George Bush would be invested under Rabin in infrastructure development; people believed that Rabin as prime minister would be able to obtain the guarantees because his position was more in tune with

American demands. Also, the leader of the old social democratic party was now touting large-scale privatization of government-owned companies.

In the political realm, Rabin positioned himself at the center—in fact, very close to Likud space. On some issues, such as the future of Gaza, he even forced Likud to adopt a more radical position than its leaders wanted. Rabin captured the center, saying that in his government "no extreme Left or Right parties" or politicians would be allowed to participate. This hinted to Likud voters that some of their party's leaders—David Levy, for instance—might be considered to be part of a Rabin coalition. Moreover, much as when Republican candidates in the United States make use of the myths of past Democratic presidents such as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Truman, or Kennedy, Rabin exploited the myth of the beloved Likud leader Menachem Begin to reach Likud supporters. Likud countered by filling the campaign with images of Begin and by having Begin's son Benyamin deliver messages for the party, but this was largely ineffective. Because of his invocation of Begin, Rabin's own personal myth was reinforced; after all, he commanded the Israeli army in its sweeping victory over the Arabs in 1967 and captured Jerusalem. By coincidence, the twenty-fifth anniversaries of the Six Day War and Jerusalem's "liberation" fell during the campaign, much to the delight of Labor and the dismay of Likud.

The election, held June 23, produced the expected outcome. Most traditional Ashkenazi supporters of Labor, almost half the new immigrants, and about 6 to 10 percent of former Likud supporters cast their vote for Labor. Labor captured 44 and Likud only 32 Knesset seats. More important, Labor had the means to prevent the formation of a right-wing bloc in parliament; together with Meretz (a group of three small left-wing parties that won 12 seats) and the two Israeli Arab parties' 5 seats, Labor commanded a majority of 61 seats in the Knesset. Rabin's journey back was complete.

COALITION FORMATION

Attempts to form a government began immediately after results were officially approved. Rabin hoped for a broad-based coalition containing all parties capable of accepting his basic platform, including Meretz, as well as the three religious parties that together captured 16 seats. Rabin also hoped to recruit the eight members from Tzomet, the biggest surprise of the election. Tzomet, which took only two seats in 1988, is a right-wing party headed by retired Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan. But during the 1992 campaign it maintained a tough stand on security while emphasizing the need for efficient and clean government, electoral reform, education, and the recruitment of orthodox Jews for the army—all issues addressed by Labor.

For Rabin a partnership with Tzomet could have been protective insurance against a potential attack

from right-wing opposition. But the alliance did not materialize. Eitan had difficulty modifying his position on the Palestinian question and his request to be made minister of defense or, alternately, minister of education and culture was not granted. The latter post was awarded to the leader of Meretz, Shulamit Aloni, an acclaimed fighter for civil rights and the separation of state and religion. Naturally the leaders of the religious parties could not swallow Aloni's appointment, and tried to get Rabin to go back on his promise to her. Rabin, however, operating under the belief that these were only tactical political moves, held firm. Thus the only religious party to join Rabin's coalition was Shas, which controls six Knesset seats.

Shas was formed in 1984 by an Ashkenazi rabbi, Menachem Shach, in order to attract electoral support from religiously and ethnically inclined oriental Jews. Wanting to free themselves from Shach's influence, and presumably because they needed immunity against allegations of personal corruption, the party leadership felt it had no alternative but to join the coalition. The decision was not well received by the other religious parties because it gave Shas the advantage of having access to public resources that could be channeled to further develop Shas's bases of support.

Faced with these difficulties, Rabin decided to go ahead and form a minimum coalition consisting of Labor, Meretz, and Shas, and the parliamentary support of the five Israeli Arab members of the Knesset. To maintain this formation Rabin had to depend on Peres for political assistance; hence his old rival was awarded the post of foreign minister. But Rabin, in addition to the prime ministership, also named himself defense minister. Most coalition members were made ministers or deputy ministers or awarded chairmanships of important Knesset committees and the like, which gave them a personal reason to help maintain stability. Moreover, the ministerial slots for police, welfare, and religious affairs have remained unmanned, awaiting the possible entrance of Tzomet and the other two religious parties into the coalition.

THE FUTURE UNDER THE MAN OF HIS WORD

The government that has run Israel since last summer, while working with only a small majority in the Knesset, while not embracing a broad range of parties, nonetheless has advantages when it comes to policymaking. The distance between the partners on key issues is not great (except, of course, when it comes to questions of state and religion), which enables the government to provide clear answers to the mounting problems inherited from Likud. The coalition's stability is thus assured, and external challenges can be easily checked.

Unique among Israeli politicians—and unusual among those from elsewhere—Rabin is known as a man of his word. By August 1992 the government had already begun to make good on some of the prime minister's campaign promises: political settlements were frozen in the West Bank, loan guarantees were promised by Bush, and peace talks were resumed with the Palestinians, Syrians, Jordanians, and Lebanese. The government exhibited firmness on domestic issues and flexibility on international ones.

Of course, in the international arena many partners are involved. Thus it is not only the Israeli positions but those of the United States and the Arabs that will determine outcomes. Administrative autonomy for the Palestinians is likely, and perhaps even some territorial arrangement with Syria. If so, Jordan and Lebanon will most likely follow the Egyptian example and sign a peace treaty with Israel. This may be challenged by right-wing zealots within Israel. Yet the public's attention is mainly focused on economic recovery. Success here may be made possible by diverting resources from security-related programs and borrowing money to satisfy economic and social needs.

To paraphrase former Foreign Minister Abba Eban, instead of a tunnel at the end of the light for Shamir's government, there is a bright light of hope at the end of the tunnel. The government, however, has yet to reach it. ■

"The dilemma facing both Israel and the Palestinians today is whether the seventh, or even the eighth, round of [the Middle East] peace talks can produce results soon enough to forestall the eruption of a low-intensity war between Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza."

The Palestinians Since the Gulf War

BY DON PERETZ

In the two years since Iraq invaded Kuwait, the Palestinians have become the unseen victims of the resulting Persian Gulf War. Most media attention focused on events in the war zone itself, offering an occasional glimpse at the refugee tide from the Gulf that overran Jordan. But once the hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis, Filipinos, and Egyptians returned to their homelands, little attention was paid to the remaining 300,000 to 400,000 Palestinian refugees from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other Gulf principalities who were stranded in Jordan. Nor was much attention paid to the plight of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who also suffered greatly because of the war.

Of course other events have long since bypassed the Gulf War; news coverage of the Middle East has shifted from the war zone to the Middle East peace talks that began in Madrid in October 1991. The Palestinians are an integral—perhaps the most important—component of this process, and the fact that Israel agreed to meet them face to face in open diplomacy is of truly historic significance. However, coverage of these bilateral parleys has tended to overlook important events and fundamental changes in the larger Palestinian community, both in the Israeli-occupied territories and in the diaspora.

THE IMPACT ON JORDAN AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The Gulf War precipitated the third mass Palestinian displacement in the last 45 years. The first was the Arab-Israel conflict of 1947–1949, when more than 700,000 Palestinians fled from the new state of Israel to surrounding Arab countries. The second occurred during and after the Six Day War in June 1967, when

300,000 fled from into Jordan from the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and Gaza.

Jordan bore the brunt of the third displacement. Its economy was already deteriorating, with unemployment between 20 and 25 percent before the Gulf refugee influx. The war itself brought economic life to a standstill. Following the departure of other refugees after the war, Jordan was left with hundreds of thousands of unemployed Palestinians who had lived in Kuwait for years. Many had left Kuwait with unpaid wages, lost retirement benefits, and savings accounts either destroyed in Kuwait or inaccessible in Iraqi, Kuwaiti, or Saudi banks. Homes and personal belongings were stolen or abandoned; commercial property and business assets lost. Many had raised families in Kuwait, and although most had Jordanian passports, thousands had never been in the Hashemite Kingdom.

Jordan was ill prepared to receive this sudden influx. There were already over a million Palestinian refugees in the country; thus more than one-third of Jordan's total population is now made up of Palestinian refugees. The problem has undermined the country's long-term development plans. The new refugees are expected to double domestic water shortages and overwhelm the already heavily taxed transport, communications, health, and educational systems. The government has had to revise its development program; instead of focusing on growth and prosperity, it now aims to minimize the deterioration of Israeli living standards.

There is little possibility that the Gulf refugees can return to Kuwait, where most had homes. Before the war, Palestinians provided between a quarter and a third of Kuwait's engineers, physicians, pharmacists, economists, accountants, teachers, carpenters, electricians, precision instrumentation manufacturers, and a variety of other skilled craftsmen and professionals; the Kuwaiti government is now determined to replace them. Since the war Kuwait has adopted a policy to rid the country of Palestinians and other remaining "undesirables." In February 1992 the chef de cabinet of Kuwait's emir accused the Palestinians of being

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“traitors” because they collaborated with the Iraqis. (Estimates are that only a small number of Palestinians were collaborators; some even risked their lives by joining the anti-Iraq Kuwaiti underground but most were probably passive.) By mid-1992, only 15 percent of the prewar Palestinian population remained in Kuwait, and government officials said the number would be lowered to 15,000 or 10,000 as soon as possible.

Economic conditions in the West Bank and Gaza have also deteriorated since the Gulf War. Nearly half the Arab population in the occupied territories is now unemployed, largely as a result of losing jobs in Israel after Saddam Hussein attacked Kuwait. When the war began, Israel, where more than 120,000 Arabs from the territories worked, closed its borders to all Arab inhabitants from the territories. As a result, some 40 percent of the work force in Gaza and about 33 percent in the West Bank was left jobless. Since the war's end, about half the number of former Arab workers has been reemployed, but the immigration of Russian Jews and government determination to end reliance on imported Arab workers dampen prospects for future employment in Israel.

Curfews and other wartime restrictions imposed on Arab communities during 1991 meant that farmers were unable to water, harvest, or market their crops; most business and commerce in the territories came to a halt. The total loss caused by the war in 1991 is projected to be in excess of \$600 million, from a total gross national income in the territories that reached \$2.4 billion in 1988.¹ By the end of 1991, UN officials said that the West Bank was on the verge of economic collapse.

Revitalizing the Palestinian economy under occupation or before a peace settlement is doubtful. The first 25 years of Israeli occupation indicate that major development is unlikely. During that era economic activity in the territories became ancillary to Israel's needs. The road network, the electricity grid, the water system, and agricultural production were developed with an emphasis on fulfilling Israeli requirements. Agriculture, industry, trade, and commerce were allowed to develop only within a larger scheme according to Israeli plans. With proposals to absorb a million new Jewish immigrants by the end of the century, it is not likely that Israel will have the means or the inclination to assist in development of a new Palestinian economy.

PALESTINIAN REACTIONS TO THE PEACE CONFERENCE

The economic conditions in Jordan and the occupied territories that have been undermined by the Gulf War have also influenced the political outlooks and perspectives of the estimated 4 million Palestinians who live there.² UN observers and relief workers who have spent lengthy periods of time among the Palestinians consider them profoundly affected by the war. Few Palestinians expect to see the establishment of their own state in the near future despite rising expectations aroused by the new Middle East peace process. Hope for a settlement favorable to the Palestinians is tempered by nearly 50 years of negotiations that have produced negligible results. Why participate in still another peace process?

Public opinion and the leadership are divided over participation. Most visible leaders in the West Bank and Gaza—those who have led the bilateral delegations at Madrid and Washington—represent Palestinian moderates. It was largely through their influence that the Palestine Liberation Organization leadership in Tunis agreed to the concept of open and public negotiations with Israel. Even though Israel has so far refused to negotiate directly with the PLO, it accepts the fact that negotiators from the territories consult and coordinate their plans with PLO headquarters.

The moderates agreed to join the negotiations despite restrictions placed on their participation by the Likud government before its defeat in the June 1992 Knesset election. The restrictions excluded PLO officials, Arab residents of Jerusalem, and anyone from outside the West Bank and Gaza from the Palestinian delegation. Since the election the new Labor government has modified these restrictions, permitting participation by diaspora Palestinians and not objecting to contacts between Palestinian delegation members and the PLO.

But Palestinian participation has not gone unchallenged. Even many not opposed to the peace process object to the terms of the negotiations. Last March, 179 prominent Palestinians, including 117 members of the Palestine National Council (PNC), addressed PLO chairman Yasir Arafat and leaders of the organization about their concerns with the peace process. They charged that Israel was escalating Arab land expropriation, population displacement, and deportation of nationalist leaders from the territories. The conditions imposed by Israel and the United States on Palestinian participation “are aimed at pushing this process toward liquidating both the cause and the Palestinian people's national rights by granting . . . self administration and by providing conditions for the perpetuation of the occupation.” Their petition demanded international recognition of the PLO as the “sole legitimate representative” of the Palestinians; termination of

¹*The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, vol. 10, no. 2 (July 1991), p. 54.

²Since 1948 there has been no accurate census of the total number of Palestinians; estimates of their numbers and distribution vary today, with some putting the total number at between 5 million and 5.5 million.

Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza; total Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories; and recognition of Palestinian "right to repatriation."³

Debate over these demands is widespread throughout communities in the occupied territories and in the diaspora. Arguments pro and con can be heard in refugee camps, on university campuses, in newspaper offices, and in coffee houses. The longer negotiations last the more intense the argumentation. It is significant that in most circles the debate is not about whether to participate in the peace process, but about conditions for Palestinian participation.

THE SPECTRUM OF DEBATE

Important factions with wide followings are opposed to negotiations under any conditions. They come from both ends of the political spectrum, from Islamic fundamentalists to militant Marxist-nationalists. Groups on the left like George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the anti-Arafat Fatah Revolutionary Council have at times joined forces with the fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement (known by its Arabic acronym, Hamas) to oppose strategies formulated by the mainstream PLO. The oppositionists are united by their determined opposition to a two-state solution; until now they have adamantly resisted any compromise with Israel, insisting that all Palestine become an independent Arab state.

Not all the Islamic establishment opposes the peace process under any conditions or terms. Many orthodox Muslims, including fundamentalists, have accepted the political decisions of the PNC—including the two-state concept—as a necessary compromise. The great danger is that tens of thousands of Palestinians are wavering on the fine line between Hamas and those clerics, many of them PNC leaders, who support the majority decision to join the peace process.

Moderate Palestinians in favor of the current negotiations believe that the ultimate objective is to end occupation and establish a self-governing entity, either separate from or confederated with Jordan. The fundamental differences between the Israeli and Palestinian delegations at the conference concerns the final outcome—will Gaza and the West Bank be totally separated from Israel, or will Israel retain a presence even in an autonomous Palestinian entity. From the start of the process the Palestinians made clear they expected to achieve independence through negotiations. The Israeli-United States position has been that negotiations must establish a transitional stage of Palestinian autonomy before the final status of the West Bank and Gaza is determined. The difference between the Israeli positions under Likud and Labor is that Likud's Prime

Minister Yitzhak Shamir made clear that under no circumstances would the West Bank and Gaza become separate from the Jewish state. His successor, Yitzhak Rabin, has been less categorical in stating his objectives. Still, even the Labor government opposes the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Negotiations now focus on interim arrangements rather than the final outcome.

The Palestinians have proposed a Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority (PISGA) to replace Israeli administration in the territories. This would be, in effect, a pre-state Palestinian establishment that would take over from the Israeli occupation forces. Elections under UN supervision would be held for a 180-member assembly with jurisdiction throughout the West Bank and Gaza over land, water, roads, electricity, and all other resources that have been controlled by Israel since 1967. PISGA would have both legislative and executive powers, would be able to conclude agreements with foreign and international bodies, and would be responsible for security and public order. PISGA control would be assured through the transfer of power to it while the Israeli military withdrew from the territories.

Both the Likud and Labor governments have categorically rejected PISGA. Likud opposed any region-wide elections or Palestinian authority, offering instead to permit municipal voting under Israeli supervision and Palestinian control of more than a dozen areas, including agriculture, education, health, taxation, local police, courts, and prisons. While refusing to allow the establishment of a legislative assembly, Labor negotiators are willing to permit elections for a smaller self-governing council. Although Israel agrees on the need for an elected Palestinian assembly, there is still wide disagreement about its functions. Present Israeli proposals closely resemble those in the 1978 Camp David accords, which called for an administrative council to manage Palestinian affairs during a five-year transition period. Discussions about the final status of the West Bank and Gaza would not begin until the end of the transition period.

A number of Palestinians now have second thoughts about the Camp David autonomy proposals. Some acknowledge that it was a lost opportunity. Had it been acted on then, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would be much closer to achieving self-rule. Those who consider Camp David a lost opportunity maintain that it was rejected in 1978 because public opinion was not then prepared for an agreement with Israel, and that the way Egyptian President Anwar Sadat presented it to the Palestinians made it seem more like an ultimatum than a proposal for discussion.

Early in 1992 several mainstream PLO leaders revived the issue of Palestinian confederation with Jordan. The concept was initially approved by the PNC in a "Political Communique" at its historic meeting in

³*Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. 21, no. 4 (Summer 1992), pp. 141-142.

Algiers in November 1988, when the organization acknowledged "the distinctive relationship between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples and affirms that the future relationship between the two states of Palestine and Jordan should be on a confederal basis as a result [of] the free and voluntary choice of the two fraternal peoples. . . ." Nabil Shaath, one of Arafat's key political advisers, raised the issue last March when he observed that details were discussed with Jordan, but that such a plan could be implemented only on the basis of parity between two equal partners.

Confederation would substantially increase Palestinian political strength, already a major force in Jordan. The plan would also give strategic depth to a Palestinian entity; a state or autonomous unit formed from the West Bank and Gaza with a total territory of some 2,500 square miles would be a strategic nightmare, incapable of defending against its much more powerful neighbors. The concept of a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation that might later include Israel and/or other surrounding Arab countries has not been discounted by many Palestinians with vision. (A three-state confederation was proposed several years ago by Israel's present foreign minister, Shimon Peres.) But even Palestinians willing to contemplate this far-reaching idea insist that public debate on the issue must await a final comprehensive peace settlement.

DEBATING THE TERMS OF PALESTINIAN "RETURN"

A major obstacle to a peace accord is disagreement over the "right of return." The concept derives from the December 1948 UN General Assembly Resolution 194 (III), which stated that "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace. . . should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date." Palestinians have interpreted the resolution, despite its ambiguity, as sanctioning their "right" to return, and in discussions with the "average" Palestinian, this is usually the first issue raised. Why, they ask, if Israel can bring in over a quarter of a million Russian Jews in the past year or so, is it not possible for an equal number of Palestinians to "return" to their homes? If funds can be obtained to build homes and provide for Jews immigrating from Europe and Ethiopia, why can't Palestinian "return" be financed?

While realizing that refugee return to Israel within its 1949 armistice lines is neither feasible nor practical, many who emphasize the demand insist that they at least be given the "right of return" to territory occupied by Israel in 1967. It is acknowledgment of the "right" rather than its implementation that they insist on. To most Israelis, Palestinian "right of return" is perceived as a code word for undermining the Jewish state. If

accepted as a general principle, Israelis fear the influx of a large enough number of Palestinians could alter the country's demography and lead to the "Lebanonization" of Israel—a violent struggle between ethnic groups for political control.

Where then will the more than 2 million Palestinians in the diaspora be settled if there is a peace accord? Palestinian economists believe that, once freed from the restraints of occupation, a Palestinian state would have sufficient development potential to absorb several hundred thousand additional inhabitants. Estimates range from 1 to 2 million immigrants over a 5 to 10 year period. However, the estimates are based on a number of highly optimistic postulates.

One of the first tasks confronting an independent Palestinian state or one federated with Jordan would be to absorb the large number of refugees already inside its borders. Palestinian refugees, more than half living in United Nations-run refugee camps, now constitute about half the total population of the West Bank and Gaza. Before additional tens of thousands of refugees can be economically absorbed, a prospective Palestinian state would have to integrate these 420,000 camp inhabitants.

Financing the integration of "returnees" in a prospective state has also been discussed by Palestinian economists. In a study prepared for the Institute of Palestine Studies, George Abed has estimated the cost of an "infrastructural program" during the next 10 to 12 years at approximately \$13 billion (in 1990 prices). The most costly item would be housing for the existing population as well as for "returnees." In addition to revitalizing infrastructure, another \$10 billion would be required for private sector development of industry, agriculture, and services. Funding would come from diverse sources: the Arab states, bilateral assistance, and international financial and development institutions.⁴

Another anticipated source is compensation to be paid for property abandoned by Palestinians in Israel during the 1947–1948 exodus. Evaluating that property, locating its present owners, and Israeli counterclaims greatly complicate the issue. Most abandoned Arab property has long since been absorbed into Israel's economy, often passing through many successive owners and classified and reclassified under a variety of Israeli laws. What was once farmland nearly 50 years ago is now at the center of urban areas, and the property values of 1948 are no longer realistic. Israeli counterclaims include property abandoned by Jews who left Iraq, Egypt, Syria, and other Arab countries, with a much higher value than the value of Arab property in Israel, according to estimates by organizations of Jews from Arab countries.

One form of compensation economists such as Abed have considered is the massive amount of housing and infrastructure built for Jewish settlers in

⁴George T. Abed, "The Economic Viability of a Palestinian State," *IPS Papers* (Washington, D. C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1990).

the territories since 1967. Israeli expenditures in the occupied territories during the last year of Likud rule were estimated to be about \$2 billion; total Israeli investment must reach several tens of billions, potentially a substantial contribution to the infrastructure of a prospective Palestinian state. Whether Jewish settlements and the accompanying infrastructure can become part of the compensation equation will depend on the future of the settlements as determined in the peace negotiations.

SETTLEMENTS AND THE OCCUPATION

Among Palestinians there is virtual unanimity about two issues at the center of the negotiations—suspending Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza, and terminating Israel's occupation. Across the spectrum, from right to left, moderate to rejectionist, secularist to fundamentalist, Jewish settlement has aroused great anxiety. The realization that during the past year the number of settlers increased by 60 percent frightens all Palestinians. Increased settlement, they argue, will preempt any possibility of establishing some kind of Palestinian entity. Failure to halt the expansion of settlements is one of the principal reasons militants have given as reason to call off the peace negotiations.

Since the Labor government took over negotiations from Likud, the pace of settlement has slowed considerably but it has not been brought to a halt. Prime Minister Rabin has drawn a distinction between "political" settlements and those established for national "security." While calling a halt to Jewish expansion in heavily populated Arab areas, the new government continues to support settlements that Labor itself organized between 1967 and 1977 when its government administered the occupied territories. Furthermore, there is no indication that Rabin intends to remove any of the 250 Jewish developments established since 1967 in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, or Gaza. The 245,000 Jewish settlers (about 130,000 of them in former Jordanian East Jerusalem) constitute a potentially powerful anti-"territory for peace" bloc.

Few Palestinians expect the other central issue at the peace conference—the occupation—to end in the next few years. The occupation, with its frequent curfews, searches and seizures, lack of civil law, punishments without trial, and the like, is seen as a major obstacle to the development of Palestinian potential; as long as it continues, Palestinians believe it will be impossible to devise their own educational system, self-governing institutions, and realize their full cultural potential. Only in a territory not subject to foreign domination can the plans of Palestinian economists, educators, and political scientists be implemented.

Prospects for ending the occupation, even under a

Labor government, are not encouraging. While Rabin and his partners in the Labor coalition accept the principle of "land for peace," the prime minister is not eager to turn the territories over to the Palestinians. Although opposed to the annexationist policies of his Likud predecessors, Rabin seems determined to maintain a security foothold in the territories, providing the Palestinians with, at most, a limited form of self-government.

THE INTIFADA CONTINUES

The realization that there has not been any tangible change since the peace talks began more than a year ago has sparked renewed unrest in the occupied territories. Nor have the five years of the intifada improved living conditions or brought Palestinians closer to self-government. Many in the territories say the uprising appears to have lost momentum, although Palestinians abroad still perceive it as a milestone in progress toward achieving national goals. It did, for several years, galvanize the community as no other event since the 1936–1939 "Arab revolt." It dealt a blow to Israel's economy, self-confidence, and continued string of political and military victories.

Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, has observed that continued support for the talks is fragile. "Because of the conditions on the ground and because of the deterioration in the human rights condition. . . there is increasing skepticism. . . pertaining to the peace process and its efficacy, its ability to change conditions," she recently stated.⁵

One of the greatest dangers is that with growing impatience, young Palestinians will turn to violence against the occupation, and against those they regard as "traitors" in their own community. Despite periodic outbursts of violence, the intifada was essentially a civil resistance movement eschewing the use of weapons. In recent months there has been a dramatic increase in the use of firearms against both Israeli soldiers and civilians. After a decline in intifada casualties, the number has suddenly shot upwards with several dozen Palestinians and Israelis killed or wounded last year.

While Rabin is willing to broaden Palestinian participation in the peace parleys by accepting representatives from outside the territories, he remains as determined as ever to crush physical resistance. Few, either Israeli or Palestinian, can forget his "iron fist" policies in the early days of the intifada when as defense minister he ordered the army to "break the bones" of stone throwers. The dilemma facing both Israel and the Palestinians today is whether the seventh, or even the eighth, round of peace talks can produce results soon enough to forestall the eruption of a low-intensity war between Israelis and Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. ■

⁵The New York Times, October 22, 1992.

"Algeria stands divided against itself as two essentially authoritarian solutions—one military and the other theocratic—battle for supremacy while secular democrats agonize over the narrow space left to them."

Algeria: The Clash between Islam, Democracy, and the Military

BY ROBERT A. MORTIMER

The Algerian historian Mohamed Harbi once remarked that in most countries the state has its army, but in Algeria the army has its state—an observation that was once again confirmed last January when President Chadli Bendjedid was deposed by a coalition of military and civilian leaders that brought the army back to the forefront of Algerian politics.

The military has always been a powerful institution in Algeria. In 1962, 1965, and 1979 the army largely determined who would hold Algeria's top office; in 1988 and 1991 it restored civil order after serious confrontations between the government and civil society. With the support of civilian politicians such as Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali, the military established a High State Council last January to replace Bendjedid, but the maneuver barely masked the acute conflict between the state and a rising Islamist social movement.

By annulling the elections of December 26, 1991, which had brought the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to the brink of controlling parliament, the military-bureaucratic elite halted the political liberalization that Bendjedid had initiated in 1989. The great irony of Bendjedid's experiment was that it opened the door to a popular movement unwilling to commit itself to the principles on which democracy rests: electoral accountability and civil rights. The decision to oust Bendjedid cheated the Islamic Front of its victory, but failed to resolve any of the fundamental questions about where Algeria was headed. The subsequent crackdown on the front drove part of the Islamist movement under-

ground and provoked a wave of terror that bloodied the country. The assassination in June of Mohamed Bou-diaf, head of the High State Council—whether by the FIS or others—dramatized the severity of the crisis:

ISLAM AS POLITICS

Bendjedid's policy of political reform was in response to the riots of October 1988, which revealed the gulf that had opened between the regime and the post-independence generation.¹ Since 1962 Algeria's rulers had drawn their legitimacy from their role in the war between 1954 and 1962 for independence from France and the institutions forged during that period, notably the army and the National Liberation Front (FLN). During the 1980s that authority wore thin as the economy faltered and government corruption grew. In ending one-party rule by means of constitutional reforms in 1989, Bendjedid unleashed a potent social movement that spoke to widespread sociopolitical discontent. The Islamists offered a relatively simple explanation for the economic ills and social problems troubling Algerians: the government had strayed from the path of Islamic piety.

The emergence of an Islamist current in Algerian politics was to be expected, since Islam remained the major source of cultural identity during the colonial period. For many of the "moudjahidines" who took up arms against France, nationalism was defined by their Muslim heritage. When more secular forces took control of the state after independence, the Islamic cultural nationalists largely withdrew into the mosques, maintaining a stand that was bound to find political expression sooner or later.

As grievances accumulated in the 1980s the Islamists' audience expanded considerably. Many of the recruits were young men without jobs; others were shopkeepers resentful of the ruling party's socialist ideology. The latter were a source of funds for the movement, as were some foreign governments (such as Saudi Arabia), which permitted Islamist "brothers" to provide modest social services in poor, overcrowded

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¹For an analysis of the cause and the aftermath of the 1988 riots, see Robert A. Mortimer, "Algeria After the Explosion," *Current History*, April 1990.

neighborhoods. The movement's vague message of public morality appealed to many Algerians fed up after 25 years of FLN rule.

The Islamists thus were waiting in the wings when Bendjedid made his audacious move and opened up Algerian politics. Whether it should recognize the Islamist movement as a legal political party—something most Arab governments have not done—was a question that divided the ruling elite at the time. At odds with the left wing of the FLN over economic policy, Bendjedid may well have counted on enlisting the Islamists in a new coalition. Whatever his reasoning, the decision to recognize the Islamists transformed Algerian politics, because, as Algerian political scientist Abdelkader Djeghloul has pointed out, “the FIS . . . is not a party like the others.”²

The front is a movement organized around the idea that the religious and political spheres are one and the same. It has successfully brandished the slogan, “to vote against the FIS is to vote against God.” Its most prominent leader, Abassi Madani, said the front was not a political party but an all-embracing expression of the popular will, while his deputy, Ali Benhadj, declared that Algeria “was not a nation that thinks in terms of a majority and a minority.” These and similar declarations sowed serious doubt about the long-term intentions of the Islamist party. Did it accept freedom of conscience and political pluralism? What would the fate of secular Algerians or of women's rights be if the front came to power? Questions like these were left unanswered in the 27 months between recognition of the FIS in September 1989 and the movement's sweeping electoral victory in December 1991.

The Islamic Salvation Front was an amalgam of several currents of Islamist thought. According to Ahmed Rouadja's 1990 book, *Les frères et la mosquée*, it brought together four major groups—Jamaat at-tabliq (The society of the message); Ahl at-talia (The people of the vanguard); Jamaat al-jihad (The holy war society); and Dawa (The call, or propagation of the faith)—that embraced a “multitude of ideological and religious nuances.” The founders organized a 35-member governing council that appointed as the front's spokesman Madani, a university professor imprisoned from 1982 to 1984 for his support of acts of political violence; he would be the person to lead the FIS toward its first electoral triumph.

REPUDIATION AND AFTERMATH

As the FIS closed ranks to contest municipal and provincial elections in 1990, the FLN was coming apart at the seams. It was split into three major factions: socialists who had dominated state policy under President Houari Boumedienne; economic liber-

als who had found favor under Bendjedid; and Arabists who were close in many ways to the Islamists. Bendjedid's choice of Mouloud Hamrouche as prime minister in September 1989, which signaled the ascendancy of the liberal reformers, left both the socialist old guard and the Arabists unenthusiastic about the party's direction. The November 1989 party congress accentuated these rifts, leaving the FLN poorly equipped to take on the insurgent Islamic Front in the upcoming elections. Bendjedid toyed with the idea of a presidential alliance with the FIS, but the Islamists had no interest in the scheme.

A great many other parties were organized in the period leading up to the June 1990 elections, but most lacked any social base. Many made a tactical decision to boycott the balloting, which basically made the election a contest between the FIS and the FLN. Not only did this assure the FIS the Islamist vote, but it also left it the prime vehicle for the protest vote. These two constituencies gave it 54 percent of the ballots cast, which translated into control of some 850 cities and towns including Algiers and Oran, and over two-thirds of the 48 provincial assemblies. The victory exceeded all estimates of the opposition's strength, suggesting that the elite was seriously out of touch with the masses. Immediately after his party's striking win, Madani called for national parliamentary elections. After resisting briefly, Bendjedid announced late in July that elections for the National Assembly would be held the following year.

Voter repudiation of the ruling party, which had garnered only 28 percent at the polls in the local elections, was a clear call for change. Yet because of the boycott by many of the non-Islamist democratic parties and the relatively low turnout (65 percent), some doubted the FIS would do as well once other alternatives were presented; the 1990 elections did not test, for instance, the chances of a coalition of democratic parties opposed to both the FIS and the FLN. The government, the army, and the non-Islamic parties all believed it was still possible to stem the tide of the Islamist challenge.

The military high command, however, was stung during the Persian Gulf crisis of 1990–1991, when the FIS criticized the army for not training and dispatching “volunteers” to defend Iraq. The front's opportunistic rhetoric on the Gulf conflict reinforced the army's suspicions of the movement, fed by an awareness of Islamist influence among army recruits—a phenomenon the top brass sought to control through strict discipline. Although the military hesitated to intervene directly in the rivalry between the FIS and the FLN—and even removed some officers known for their strong anti-Islamist views—it did not look benignly on the idea of further electoral gains for the FIS.

By the same token, the army's distrust of the ruling party also grew, especially during the spring of 1991,

²Abdelkader Djeghloul, “Le multipartisme à l'algérienne,” *Maghreb-Machrek* (Paris), January–March 1990, p. 199.

when the FLN, under Prime Minister Hamrouche, took advantage of its complete control of the sitting parliament (elected in 1987 when a single-party system was still in effect) to push through an outrageous redistricting bill. The plan increased the number of seats in the Popular National Assembly from 295 to 542, with most of the new seats going to small towns in southern Algeria—the only part of the country where the FLN had done well in the 1990 elections. A poll conducted in May indicated the tactic might work: it showed the FIS receiving 33 percent of the popular vote and sending 206 deputies to parliament, while giving the FLN 244 seats for only 24 percent of the vote.

All the other parties denounced this blatant exercise in gerrymandering. Prophetically, Hocine Ait Ahmed, leader of the Socialist Forces Front (FFS), declared that it would leave Algeria no choice but a police state or a fundamentalist state. The FIS termed the law “high treason” and demanded its abrogation. At the end of May it decided to go to the streets to overturn the law. When protesters occupied key transit points around Algiers, Bendjedid ordered them removed. After violence erupted, Bendjedid canceled the scheduled elections and declared martial law, as he had in 1988. The military restored calm but also insisted that the president fire Hamrouche, whom it held responsible for the breakdown in civil order. It proposed Sid Ahmed Ghozali, a prominent figure during the Boumedienne era, for the post.

The army thus moved back to the front line in Algerian politics. For the second time in less than three years it had intervened on behalf of the state in a clash with elements of civil society. Since the army had earlier withdrawn its bloc of representatives from the Central Committee of the FLN, it viewed this crisis as primarily the fault of the politicians who had pushed through the election law. Ghozali was handed the task of organizing “free and clean elections” not only for parliament but for the presidency as well—thus meeting one of the FIS’s demands. This suggested that the military leadership included Bendjedid among the politicians at fault. At the same time, the army distrusted the militant element within the Islamic Front, and it began to arrest Islamist activists for their alleged role in sparking acts of violence; when tensions failed to subside, the army hardened its position by arresting Madani, Benhadj, and five other top leaders at the end of June. Having thus decapitated the FIS, the military leadership lifted martial law and allowed the electoral process to resume under Ghozali’s direction.

THE DECEMBER 1991 ELECTIONS: DEFEAT IN VICTORY

The army assumed that more moderate elements would now take control of the Islamic Front. Bashir Faqih, for example, a leader from western Algeria,

publicly charged Madani with disregarding the majority view of the front’s governing council during the events of early June. El Hachemi Sahnouni, one of the party’s founders, reportedly wanted to reorganize the front, leaving out its “stray sheep.” Ahmed Marani, another member of the governing council, went on television to criticize Madani: “The FIS’s success has gone to his head. He heeds only the flatterers who glorify him.” Despite these divisions within the leadership, the Madani faction held onto control through Abdelkader Hachani, a member of the younger generation of Islamist leaders who was made head of a new “provisional executive bureau” of the FIS in July.

Throughout the fall of 1991 the FIS cultivated an air of uncertainty regarding its intention to participate in the rescheduled parliamentary elections. Many observers speculated that it had lost some of its electoral following after the disruptions and internal disputes of May and June, yet it organized a huge rally on November 1, the anniversary of the outbreak of the war for national independence, which demonstrated its continuing hold on many voters. Meanwhile, the Ghozali government prepared a new redistricting bill that set the number of seats in the new parliament at 430; members were to be elected in two rounds of voting. Only the FIS succeeded in running a candidate in every district; the ruling FLN had a candidate in all but one of the constituencies, and five other parties were represented in at least two-thirds of the districts around the country.

Although rumors circulated throughout the fall that the army would intervene if the Islamists won the election, the most common expectation was that no party would win a majority and some kind of coalition government would be formed. Just a few days before the December 26 balloting, Bendjedid announced that he was available to remain in office until the end of his term in December 1993, implying that he anticipated some form of “cohabitation” with a prime minister selected by a parliamentary coalition.

The election returns dispelled any such presumption. The FIS captured 188 seats by achieving absolute majorities in the first round—just 28 seats short of a parliamentary majority. The FLN won only 16 seats, while Ahmed’s FFS took 25 and three independents were also elected; this made a total of 232 races that were decided in the first round. Moreover, the Islamic Front was fielding one of two candidates in 186 of the 198 districts scheduled for runoffs—in most cases, the candidate in the lead. Its victory in the second round, therefore, was virtually assured.

However, several irregularities were noted in the election, chief among them a surprisingly low level of participation. Only 7.8 million (59 percent) of Algeria’s 13.2 million registered voters took part; thus, although the FIS received 47 percent of the ballots cast, this represented less than 25 percent of those registered to

vote. In the aftermath of the election it was discovered that some 900,000 electors cards had never been distributed by municipal governments, generally in towns controlled by the FIS; distribution that had taken place often occurred at the mosques. Moreover, about 1 million additional voters went to the polls only to be told that their names were not on the voting lists. In all, some 2 million voters appear to have been disenfranchised by one mechanism or another. The results also showed that despite its overwhelming victory, the FIS had lost more than 1 million votes in comparison to its total in the 1990 elections. No doubt some of this loss came because husbands were not allowed to cast votes for their wives in 1991, as had been permitted the previous year.

Whatever doubts may have hung over the electoral process, the more fundamental issue was what would happen if the FIS took control of the government and the National Assembly. Large numbers of Algerians feared the imposition of a theocratic Islamic republic if the front came to power. Although Abdelkader Hachani sought to reassure secular Algerians that public liberties would be guaranteed, other Islamist activists spoke of banning non-Islamist parties and closing down anti-FIS newspapers. Various editors expressed their concern that Algeria was on the verge of returning to a monolithic order similar in form if not in content to the past single-party ideology. On January 9, 1992, women's groups demonstrated against FIS disregard for women's rights. These real divisions in Algerian society provided a rationale for the military-bureaucratic elite's intervention against the FIS.

The coup followed a complex scenario designed to perpetuate the role of the army as kingmaker rather than direct ruler. The first step was to have Bendjedid announce his resignation as a "sacrifice in the service of the higher interests of the nation." Before stepping down on January 11, Bendjedid signed a decree dissolving the National Assembly, thus preventing its president from serving as acting president of the republic, as would normally occur under the constitution. The decision on how to proceed in light of this double vacancy fell to the Constitutional Council, which decreed that the army and the prime minister held the primary responsibility for "assur[ing] the continuity of the state." Ghazali convened an advisory organ, the High Security Council, which made two important decisions: it annulled the results of the parliamentary elections, and announced it would name a new collective executive organ to assume the powers of the presidency. The point of all this fancy footwork was to avert a new presidential election—which the FIS could be expected to win, of course—and to set up a new institution in which the military would be represented but not in overt control of the government. Unsurprisingly, the FIS condemned the coup as a "plot against Algeria and the Islamic project"; some of

the other parties (although neither the FLN nor the FFS) welcomed the intervention.

BOUDIAF'S STRUGGLE

The second act began with a major surprise: the choice of Mohamed Boudiaf as head of the new High State Council. Boudiaf, one of the nine founding fathers of the FLN in 1954, left Algeria for exile in Morocco in 1964 after clashes with the government of Ahmed Ben Bella. Respected as a man of great personal and political integrity, Boudiaf was nonetheless little known to the post-independence generation. Only a few days before the coup, Boudiaf had declared in an interview from Morocco that it would be a good thing if the Islamic Front came to power and ended the FLN's long hold on the Algerian political system. He could, therefore, be viewed as a distinguished opponent of the old order and a potential voice for reconciliation. His selection was both imaginative and promising, but the inflamed situation that led to his return to his native land was far from favorable for political compromise.

The second key member of the ruling council was Major General Khaled Nezzar, leader of the Algerian military establishment. Nezzar, who had become defense minister in July 1990, was viewed as one of the architects of the modernization and professionalization of the Algerian military, an officer whose mission was to maintain the military's role as the power behind the scenes. But the crises of October 1988 and June 1991 had thrust the army to the forefront of politics. Seconded by other top military leaders, Nezzar had led the crackdown against the FIS in the summer of 1991. Clearly Nezzar was the military's strongman in the new five-man directorate.

The key to the new powerholders' strategy was Boudiaf's credibility. His great asset was his early break with the FLN; his great liability that he was virtually unknown to the generation that came of age after independence. He had no popular mandate to govern, and lacked any popular power base in Algeria. That his unsullied reputation might accord legitimacy to the new ruling body, as Prime Minister Ghazali and General Nezzar hoped, was a desperate gamble—all the more so because the army was now determined to dismantle the FIS.

Even before Boudiaf arrived in Algeria last January 16, security forces began to arrest prominent members of the Islamic Front, including some who had been elected in the December balloting. Soon Hachani was taken into custody for allegedly inciting soldiers to desert, and another prominent FIS spokesperson was detained for condemning the coup. At the same time, militant Islamists began a campaign of attacks on soldiers and policemen. As the frequency of these incidents increased, the authorities carried out more arrests. Some 5,000 people were arrested in the month following the cancellation of the election. Disorder

spread rapidly across the country, and on February 9 the ruling council declared a state of emergency and called for the dissolution of the FIS.

For five months Boudiaf waged a lonely struggle for a fresh approach to Algeria's discontents. He opposed the theocratic pretensions of the Islamists: the mosques, he declared, must once again become "places of prayer and not of political propaganda." At the same time, he declared that he was "attuned to popular opinion which [was] seeking a radical change" in the way Algeria should be governed.

His personal agenda clearly focused on punishing malefactors and restoring public confidence in the integrity of government. Yet Boudiaf had an inherent credibility problem, because large numbers of Algerians had voted in December for "radical change" only to see their intentions thwarted. Moreover, the military's number one priority was stamping out the FIS, not corruption.

Striving heroically to chart out a third path between an Islamic republic and a militarized version of the old regime, Boudiaf discovered he had very little room to maneuver. He called for a change in the makeup of the Ghazali government, but when a new government was presented at the end of February, it looked very much like its predecessor (one newspaper headline read "Ghazali replaces Ghazali as head of government"). All the important ministries (defense, interior, economy, foreign affairs, energy) remained in the same hands. The most notable change was the recruitment of two ministers, who had ties to the Islamists. This modest gesture in the direction of a movement that had thousands of members currently under arrest did not have much impact; two weeks later an administrative court officially dissolved the FIS, saying it was responsible for the violence plaguing the country.

Boudiaf began to question the manner in which the army was conducting its campaign against the Islamists. He called for a sharper distinction between the treatment of armed terrorists and mere sympathizers, and closed some of the detention camps where Islamists were being held. Meanwhile, daily clashes between guerrillas and security forces took their toll.

On June 29 Boudiaf himself fell victim to the climate of violence when he was assassinated while delivering a speech in eastern Algeria. He was slain by a member of his own security guard, in circumstances that were hardly clarified by the government's preliminary report on the assassination. Although it was plausible that radical Islamists could have infiltrated the special services responsible for presidential security, an alternative hypothesis held that rogue elements in the military eliminated Boudiaf. The head of state had opponents in both camps, but his course of action was perhaps more threatening in the long run to those in power. Whichever side brought Boudiaf down, his murder left the country even more polarized than before.

Despite this exacerbation of the crisis, the military did not put General Nezzar forward to replace Boudiaf. Instead, ruling council member Ali Kafi was tapped, as once again the elite turned to a figure known for his role in the war for independence. Though unquestionably a patriot, Kafi did not have the independence from the old regime that Boudiaf had brought to the post. While perceived as a conciliator and critic of certain past abuses, Kafi appeared more of a figurehead.

Confidence in Kafi's capacity to lead the country in new directions was hardly enhanced when the ruling council named Belaid Abdesslam the new prime minister. Economic czar of the Boumedienne years, Abdesslam had been a steady critic of the market-oriented economic reforms of Bendjedid's administration. The military presumably saw in him a resolute leader, firm in his economic convictions and secular political beliefs; still, he represented a throwback to the past at a moment of national anguish about the future.

The day Abdesslam announced his cabinet, guerrillas staged attacks in three cities. A month later they exploded a bomb at the Algiers airport, killing 10 people and wounding more than 100. In the midst of all this bloodshed, a military tribunal sentenced Madani and Benhadj to 12 years in prison for their roles in the disorders of June 1991—events that appeared mild compared to the terrorism of 1992. Although the security forces made some headway against the violence late last year, Algeria had lost its way.

THE MYTH SHATTERED

Islam is a powerful ideology in the Arab world today because secular regimes have often failed to deliver economic and social justice. Algeria slipped in this direction in the 1980s, when the Islamists enjoyed in the mosques a political space that other opposition forces were denied. The FIS captured the protest vote because it was the most credible alternative to the old elite; nonetheless, 53 percent of the electorate voted for other alternatives in 1991. Because democracy in Algeria was still so untested, many Algerians feared the possibility of a theocratic party in power. Yet cutting the democratic experiment short provoked bitterness and recrimination, violence and repression.

At present there are currents in the army favorable to a complete takeover and others edging toward a dialogue, with moderate Islamists. Politicians from Bendjedid to Kafi have recognized the need to find some middle path that can bridge the gap between secular and Islamist Algerians. The bloody polarization of 1992 inexorably narrowed this middle ground; moreover, the political crisis sapped the energies needed to cope with economic and social problems. Algeria stands divided against itself as two essentially authoritarian solutions—one military and the other theocratic—battle for supremacy while secular democrats agonize over the narrow space left to them. ■

BOOK REVIEWS

ON THE MIDDLE EAST

Shifting Lines in the Sand: Kuwait's Elusive Frontier with Iraq

By David H. Finnie. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992. 221 pp., \$29.95.

Shifting Lines in the Sand is an exhaustive look at almost a century of border disputes between Iraq and Kuwait. Finnie skillfully unravels the secret Anglo-Kuwaiti agreements, tribal migrations, and cross-border land holdings that Iraqi leaders from King Faisal to Saddam Hussein have used to support their claim that the Gulf emirate belongs to Iraq.

The book is admirably clear and well researched, and it should become the definitive work on the border dispute. The text also suggests an intriguing issue for further study: the means by which Kuwait has won the protection of world powers—on an impressive variety of pretexts—since the early nineteenth century. It may surprise some to learn that in order to protect Kuwaiti shipping from piracy and high tariffs, the emirate's vessels were reflagged by the Ottomans in the 1830s, long before the Reagan administration was persuaded to do the same in the mid-1980s; and that the British were committed to defend Kuwait from attack decades before its oil reserves were discovered, confident that it was a "vital arena of defense and . . . communication" with India.

This history should be of particular comfort to advocates of Kuwait; whenever hostile powers have sought to disturb the emirate's lines in the sand, Kuwait has convinced its allies that it is indispensable. For a small monarchical government in the desert, this "assisted survival" is an outstanding—and necessary—achievement.

Matthew W. Maguire

The Kurds: A Concise Handbook

By Mehrdad R. Izady. Washington D.C.: Taylor and Francis, 1992. 268 pp., \$39.95.

Prior to the installation of an Allied "security zone" in Iraqi Kurdistan in April 1991, the Western media usually dismissed the Kurds as one more meddlesome minority on the diplomatic stage, threatening the integrity of nation-states with "bitter, ancient feuds." However, once television beamed pictures of beleaguered Kurds fleeing the onslaught of Iraqi soldiers, Kurdistan became a nation of martyrs, playing Danzig or the Sudetenland to the Hitler-on-the-Tigris, Saddam Hussein.

It is a tribute to the author, a former lecturer in the

Department of Near Eastern Studies at Harvard, that he avoids both stereotypes. Neither the noble savages nor the ethnic pests of news reports, Izady's Kurds are the heirs to an extraordinarily vibrant cultural legacy, with a history of liberal attitudes toward women and religious pluralism. They are also politically myopic and prone to cultural meiosis, traits that have helped to make them among the poorest and least educated of Middle Eastern peoples.

As a reference work, *The Kurds* is remarkably complete. Those looking for readings on Kurdistan's fractious political parties will not be disappointed; nor will readers seeking an introduction to Kurdish decorative textiles. All entries display a thorough knowledge of the topic at hand, and are conveniently cross-referenced with related passages elsewhere, within and without the text.

Perhaps the only major flaw in the book is the author's failure to directly address the central paradox of Kurdish nationalism. He celebrates the Kurds' diversity—linguistic, religious, and political—and with few caveats, believes that these differences have had only a marginal impact on the Kurds' political frustrations. For Izady, the true villain is geopolitics, which has "effectively precluded" the Kurds from carving their own country out of Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran. History is not so generous; internecine struggles, both tribal and ideological, have crippled Kurdish independence movements throughout this century—most poignantly after World War I, when a host of more united nations received the Kurds' independence. More recent events indicate that few lessons were learned from that failure; the Kurds are now squandering their opportunity in Iraq by shooting each other along the Turkish-Iraqi border.

A similar problem arises when Izady takes on the issue of a single Kurdish "national identity." He compares the Kurds' sense of unity to that of previously colonized nations like Ireland and Egypt, which later managed to forge an independent state out of a heterogeneous society. However, both countries were supported by greater internal cohesion—especially in language and religion—than the author implies. He also compares the Kurds' identity to Arab transnational loyalties. This analogy succeeds on ethnic and cultural terms, but given the inability of the Arab League to agree on a common policy toward Israel, Iraq, or anything else, it only reinforces one's sense that even if favorable geopolitical winds aid the Kurdish cause, a united Kurdistan is a long way off indeed.

M. W. M.

Please, No Police

By Aras Ören. Translated by Teoman Sipahigil. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992. 120 pp., \$8.95.

An estimated 15 million foreign workers and their families currently reside in Europe, including 3 million Turks, half of them in Germany. From the late 1950s to the mid-1970s the governments both of cash-hungry countries with high unemployment and of more developed countries with dwindling work forces encouraged labor migration on a large scale. But the "guest workers" who arrived to take up the menial and low-paying jobs their host countries had to offer often found prejudice and humiliation waiting for them. Despite this, most never return home, and their children and grandchildren born in Europe frequently feel part of neither their inherited culture nor the surrounding one.

These experiences have given rise to what German critics call *Gastarbeiterliteratur* (the literature of guest workers), which despite the name is mainly written by intellectuals for a bookish audience. *Please, No Police* is the first work to appear in English from the growing body of literature centered around Turkish workers abroad—in this case, in "this land of misery they call Germany." Although originally published in 1980 (in a German translation from the Turkish) and set in the West Berlin of 1973, the novella feels as current as headlines on neo-Nazi violence, and in its uninsistent way carries great authority.

The Swiss poet Max Frisch said of the guest workers, "We wanted a labor force, but instead we got human beings." There are few abstractions in *Please, No Police*, only the less affluent denizens of Berlin going about their daily lives, which on the few days the story covers include much hard, dirty work, many beers, a self-induced abortion, a death, and a visit to a tattoo parlor. The portrait is impressionistic, but the details chosen are jagged and vivid as broken glass. This short book's large gallery of immediately credible characters includes a rebellious teen-age hairdresser, an isolated old man, and refugees from the Soviet sector, as well as resident Turks both optimistic and without hope. All, Ören appears to say, are equally trapped, by class, by biology, by their limited horizons, and are cut off from one another. Yet the author pays careful attention to each one, entering the heads of his humblest actors, giving the voiceless a voice, as Akile Gürsoy Tezcan suggests in the scholarly introduction.

The novella is ultimately stuffed with life rather than depressing, the many touches of black humor and human sympathy animating even the grimmest passages. Emblematic is the character Ali Itir, who has sneaked into the country on a tourist stamp and attempts to ingratiate himself in his minimal German, wanting only to string together days of casual labor shoveling snow, buy a suit, and "sport a personality" that he could never have in Turkey. Hoping for work

tomorrow, he thinks, "My, my, my, come down blessed snow, come down for six months, a year! You come down so that Ali, your subject, will have work. If you wish, never stop, come down forever. . . ." That Ali's sojourn in Germany is so brief and troubled bodes ill for the future of the ever-striving guest workers of Europe.

Alice H. G. Phillips

ALSO RECEIVED ON THE MIDDLE EAST

The Gulf Conflict: 1990–1991:

Diplomacy and War in the New World Order

By Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. 499 pp., \$24.95.

Desert Shield to Desert Storm:

The Second Gulf War

By Dilip Hiro. New York: Routledge, 1992. 591 pp., \$18.95.

The Imperial Temptation:

The New World Order and America's Purpose

By Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992. 240 pp., \$22.50, cloth; \$14.95, paper.

Just War and the Gulf War

By James Turner Johnson and George Weigel. Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1991. 169 pp., \$16.95.

Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War

By John J. Fialka. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. 78 pp., \$7.95.

Arms Over Diplomacy:

Reflections on the Persian Gulf War

By Dennis Menos. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 1992. 192 pp., \$42.95.

The United States and the Middle East:

A Search for New Perspectives

Edited by Hooshang Amirahmadi. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993. 491 pp., \$49.50.

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By Jill Crystal. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992. 194 pp., \$37.50.

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By Bernard Reich. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1992. 421 pp., \$47.50.

Women in Middle Eastern History:

Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender

Edited by Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992. 343 pp., \$35.00.

Women and Gender in Islam

By Leila Ahmed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992. 296 pp., \$30.00. ■

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

NOVEMBER 1992

INTERNATIONAL

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
(See also *Liberia*)

Nov. 7—Meeting in Nigeria, the 16-member trading consortium imposes a trade embargo on territory in Liberia controlled by Charles Taylor's rebel National Patriotic Front.

European Community (EC)
(See *Intl, Yugoslav Crisis; Belgium; France; US*)

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
Nov. 18—Alliance representatives say they will work with the Western European Union to help enforce the total economic embargo on Yugoslavia that the UN declared in May; there are 7 warships under NATO command in the waters around Yugoslavia.

United Nations (UN)
(See also *Intl, Yugoslav Crisis; Angola; El Salvador; Lebanon*)
Nov. 10—The Security Council votes unanimously to deploy military observers at 13 airfields in the newly independent Balkan states; UN officers have estimated as many as 75 observers will be needed to help enforce the organization's October 9 ban on all military flights over Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Nov. 16—In a 13-0 vote, the Security Council authorizes a naval blockade of Yugoslavia backed by the right to enforce it militarily; the blockade is to be implemented along the Danube River as well as in the Adriatic Sea; China and Zimbabwe abstain.
Nov. 19—The Security Council unanimously calls for a total arms embargo against Liberia.
Nov. 24—The General Assembly passes a nonbinding resolution calling for the repeal of the long-standing US embargo against Cuba; the vote is 59 to 3, with 79 abstentions.
The Security Council approves a plan by Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to deploy military observers in Macedonia as part of an effort to prevent violence from breaking out in the newly independent country.
Nov. 25—In Copenhagen, at least 87 countries agree to move up the deadline for the elimination of ozone-depleting gases such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) to January 1, 1996, from 2000, the date agreed on under the 1987 Montreal Protocol; the group also shortens the timetable for phasing out the use of other chemicals harmful to the ozone.
Nov. 30—By a 14-0 vote, the Security Council approves the imposition of trade sanctions against areas in Cambodia controlled by the Khmer Rouge; China abstains.

Yugoslav Crisis
(See also *Intl, NATO, UN*)
Nov. 1—Hospital officials in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, say 19 people were killed and 146 wounded in yesterday's shelling of the city by Serb militias backed by the Yugoslav army.
Nov. 3—The *New York Times* reports the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav army has quit the siege of Dubrovnik, Croatia, and withdrawn its forces from the surrounding area; Serbs began their attack on the city October 1, 1991.

A spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees asks the Croatian government to allow thousands of Bosnian refugees from Jajce to enter the country; after accepting 600,000 Bosnian refugees, Croatia has sealed its border to all but those who have relatives in Croatia or visas for foreign countries; UN officials have estimated the number of refugees created by the 7-month-old Bosnian war has swollen to over 1.5 million.

In Belgrade, Yugoslav Prime Minister Milan Panic survives a no-confidence motion in the upper house of parliament, 18 to 17; the motion was overwhelmingly approved yesterday in the lower house.

Representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross announce the organization has postponed the release of 5,000 prisoners in Serb-run detention centers in Bosnia because they cannot return to their homes and no country will accept them as refugees.

Nov. 10—In Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, 4 people were killed, 70 injured, and 87 arrested during clashes between ethnic Albanians and police several days ago, according to today's *The New York Times*; the unrest began after reports circulated that an Albanian had been beaten during a police raid.
Nov. 13—At the UN, EC mediator Lord Owen and UN special envoy Cyrus Vance say the embargo against Yugoslavia has "gaping holes" in it; they say oil is being transported along the Danube River, across the borders with Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Romania, and from the Adriatic coast.
Nov. 17—Officials in the administration of US President George Bush say Greek tankers have transported 450,000 gallons of oil to Yugoslavia recently; they also say Greece, Egypt, Malta, and Italy have repeatedly violated the UN economic embargo imposed on Yugoslavia by shipping products directly to the country or through Bulgaria.
Nov. 29—Despite a recent cease-fire agreement, heavy fighting between Croat and Serb forces takes places near the Bosnian towns of Orasje and Brcko, and Serbs shell Gradacac, Tesanj, and Olovo.

ANGOLA

Nov. 1—In the capital city of Luanda, government forces mount an offensive against strongholds of the insurgent National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA); fighting began October 29 after the governing Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) won last month's parliamentary elections; Angolan President Eduardo dos Santos faces a runoff against UNITA head Jonas Savimbi, who was the runner-up in the presidential election.
A spokesman for UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali announces a truce between the Angolan government and UNITA to take effect tomorrow throughout the country.
Nov. 3—It is estimated that as many as 1,000 people were killed in the fighting in Luanda.
Nov. 26—The country's 1st elected parliament opens, but the 70 UNITA members of the 220-seat body boycott the session. UNITA fighters have occupied nearly 70% of Angola since the election.

AUSTRALIA

Nov. 23—A spokesman for Prime Minister Paul Keating announces that a ban on homosexuals in the military has been lifted.

BELGIUM

Nov. 28—Farmers, using 350 tractors, cut off access to the city of Tournai and snarl traffic downtown to protest an agreement reached last week by the EC and the US on reducing Community agricultural subsidies; yesterday Belgian and French farmers blocked the border with tractors.

BRAZIL

Nov. 4—*The New York Times* reports estimates by human rights groups that say as many as 1,264 civilians have been killed by military police in the state of São Paulo since January.

BULGARIA

Nov. 3—In Sofia, the Supreme Court finds Georgi Atanasov, the country's last Communist prime minister, guilty of misusing \$8,400 from a charity fund and sentences him to a 10-year prison term.

BURKINA FASO

(See US)

CAMBODIA

(See Intl, UN)

CAMEROON

(See US)

CANADA

Nov. 3—The armed forces announce they will comply with an October 27 federal court decision that found the military's policy of barring homosexuals from serving contrary to the nation's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

CHINA

Nov. 30—In a statement issued today, the government says it will consider invalid all contracts signed by the colonial government in Hong Kong but not approved by Beijing once Hong Kong reverts to Chinese control in June 1997; the Hong Kong government responds that this violates the 1984 Joint Declaration and the 1990 Basic Law governing the transition, both promulgated by China and Britain.

COLOMBIA

Nov. 8—President César Gaviria Trujillo imposes a nationwide 90-day state of emergency after as many as 9 people die and 60 sustain injuries in 30 overnight bomb explosions.

Nov. 10—*The New York Times* reports 26 police officers were killed in a raid by left-wing insurgents several days ago; the report also says the government has created an 8,000-member "energy police" force to protect oil and electricity installations and that it plans a counterinsurgency army brigade for the state of Casanare, where oil reserves expected to yield 2 billion barrels were discovered late last month.

Nov. 11—Nine bombs explode in Medellín and Cali, killing 1 person and wounding at least 35 others.

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (CIS)

(See also Korea, South)

Nov. 1—Two regiments of Russian paratroopers join Russian Interior Ministry troops sent yesterday to the North Ossetia republic in southern Russia to quell fighting between Ossetian police and members of the Ingush ethnic group that began October 30; the Itar-Tass and Interfax news agencies report that at least 5 people have been killed and 70 wounded; Ingush fighters have also taken hostage nearly 80 Russian troops. The Ingush demand control of the republic's Prigorodny district, which their forebears held until they were expelled in 1944.

Nov. 2—Russian President Boris Yeltsin declares a month-long state of emergency in North Ossetia and Chechen-Ingushetia.

Nov. 3—In Moscow, Cuban Vice President Lionel Soto and Aleksandr Shokhin, a Russian deputy prime minister, sign an agreement allowing Russia to continue to use the formerly Soviet electronic intelligence gathering center in Lourdes, Cuba; accords regarding trade, shipping, and economic cooperation are also signed.

Nov. 4—Voting 157 to 1, with 26 abstentions, the Russian parliament approves the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) the Soviet Union and the US signed in July 1991; parliament votes, however, to delay the exchange of ratification documents until agreements have been reached with the other 3 former Soviet nuclear states on nuclear arms still in their territory. On October 1 the US Senate, voting 93 to 6, approved the treaty, which commits both the US and the CIS to reduce the number of their strategic nuclear missiles to 1,600 and their nuclear warheads to 6,000 over 7 years.

Nov. 10—Russian troops enter Nazran, the capital of Ingushetia, meeting virtually no resistance; Russian television reports 133 Ossetians and 120 Ingush have been killed in the recent fighting, and 24 Russian troops have been wounded.

Nov. 30—The Constitutional Court rules Yeltsin's 1991 banning of the Soviet and Russian Communist parties legal but says low-level party cells are permissible; it says cases arising from the government's seizure of party property must be decided by civil courts.

CUBA

(See Intl, UN; CIS)

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Nov. 25—Parliament approves the division of Czechoslovakia into 2 independent countries at midnight on December 31, 1992; the bill receives 183 votes, only 3 more than the required three-fifths majority in the 300-seat body. The Czech and Slovak republics have agreed to a customs union and have said they will divide the armed forces and will temporarily maintain a joint currency.

EGYPT

(See also Iran)

Nov. 12—Four Islamic Group militants fire automatic rifles at a tourist bus in Qena, wounding at least 5 Germans and 2 Egyptians; 1 of the assailants is captured by police.

Nov. 13—Police arrest 170 people in a raid on the southern town of Hugairat, where suspects in yesterday's attack in Qena are believed to be hiding.

Nov. 16—Interior Minister Abdel-Halim Moussa tells a parliamentary committee that police will be stationed along the highway between Cairo and Luxor to deter terrorist attacks on tourists; Moussa also says 67 militants trained in Afghanistan, Iran, and Sudan have been arrested since 1990.

EL SALVADOR

Nov. 7—UN Assistant Secretary General Alvaro de Soto announces that the government and leaders of the Farabundo

Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) have agreed to the terms for a purge of the military that may include over 100 officers and Defense Minister General René Emilio Ponce.

FRANCE

(See also Belgium; Taiwan)

Nov. 7—A Japanese ship carrying 1.7 tons of radioactive plutonium reprocessed by a French state-owned company leaves Cherbourg for Japan, despite international concern about possible environmental hazards or terrorist attacks; the French navy detains the captain and crew of a boat from the environmental group Greenpeace that was protesting the shipment.

Nov. 25—After debating for 9 hours, members of the National Assembly approve a motion supporting an agreement the EC and the US reached last week on substantial cuts in agricultural subsidies; the vote is 301 to 251, with 6 abstentions. Nearly 3,000 farmers demonstrate near the assembly against the pact; 56 police officers are injured, and 12 protesters arrested; farmers also storm the Paris Stock Exchange, briefly interrupting trading.

GERMANY

Nov. 8—In Berlin, 350,000 people attend a rally protesting violence against foreigners; leftist demonstrators calling establishment politicians "hypocrites" disrupt a speech by President Richard von Weizsäcker. There were 1,453 reported attacks on foreigners in Germany in the 1st 10 months of 1992; some 500,000 refugees entered the country during the period.

Nov. 14—In Bonn, more than 100,000 demonstrators protest anti-foreigner violence and a proposed constitutional amendment that would make it more difficult for those seeking asylum on political grounds to enter Germany.

Nov. 17—In Berlin, the trial of former East German leader Erich Honecker and 4 other top officials on manslaughter charges stemming from fatal shootings of escapees at the Berlin Wall is suspended because of Honecker's health.

Nov. 21—In overnight incidents, leftists brawl with supporters of neo-Nazi groups in Berlin and the city of Erfurt; 1 person is killed and 6 are injured; police clash with rioting youths in 3 other eastern German cities.

Nov. 23—In Mölln, in the western state of Schleswig-Holstein, firebombs thrown into 2 houses kill 3 Turks and injure 9; police suspect neo-Nazis in the bombings.

Nov. 27—The government bans the Nationalist Front, a neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic group advocating the expulsion of all foreigners from the country.

GHANA

Nov. 5—With 99% of precincts reporting, results from the 1st presidential election in 13 years, held November 3, show that Jerry Rawlings has won 58.7% of the vote, and his nearest challenger, Albert Adu Boahen, 30%; Rawlings came to power in a military coup in 1981.

GREECE

(See Intl, Yugoslav Crisis)

HAITI

(See US)

INDONESIA

Nov. 20—In East Timor, government troops capture José Alexandre Gusmão, known as Xanana, the head of the separatist

Revolutionary Front for the Independence of East Timor; Gusmão reportedly led a pro-independence demonstration last year at which Indonesian soldiers killed as many as 200 people.

IRAN

(See also Turkey)

Nov. 4—Government radio announces the arrest of American businessman Milton Meier on charges of espionage, bribery, and collaborating with SAVAK, former Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi's secret police.

Nov. 7—The *New York Times* reports Saudi intelligence officials have said Iran has placed Silkworm antiship missiles on Abu Musa, 1 of the 3 islands in the Persian Gulf that it has occupied since April.

Nov. 16—State radio charges that Egypt is plotting an attack on Iran in order to destabilize the regime.

IRAQ

(See also Turkey; UK)

Nov. 1—In Salahuddin, more than 200 representatives from opposition groups end a 5-day meeting during which they elected a 3-person leadership council and called for a federal structure for the country as well as a parliamentary democracy; the 3 leaders elected are Massoud Barzani, who is also head of the Kurdistan Democratic party; Hassan al-Naqib, a Sunni Muslim and former Iraqi general; and Mohammed Bahr al-Eloom, a Shiite Muslim cleric.

Kurdish officials report Turkish aircraft have attacked 2 Iraqi Kurd rebel bases near Zakho, killing 14 people, and that Turkish ground forces—now numbering at least 15,000—have driven as far as 14 miles inside Iraq. Iraqi Kurds aided Turkish forces in surrounding Turkish Kurdistan Workers party (PKK) rebels in an offensive last week; 2 days ago the PKK agreed to a cease-fire under which its fighters will move to neighboring countries or disarm and withdraw from the border with Turkey to designated areas in northern Iraq.

IRELAND

Nov. 5—After the withdrawal yesterday of his coalition partners, the Progressive Democrats, Prime Minister Albert Reynolds's government loses a vote of confidence in parliament; the Presidential Commission dissolves parliament and schedules elections.

Nov. 27—With about 80% of the contests decided in the November 25 parliamentary elections, Fianna Fail is projected to win 71 seats, 13 less than a simple majority; Fine Gael 45; Labor 33; and smaller parties the remainder. Voters also approve by about a 3-to-2 margin proposed constitutional amendments guaranteeing access to information on abortion and legalizing travel abroad to obtain an abortion, but defeat by about 2 to 1 an amendment that would have allowed abortion if the mother's life were in danger.

ISRAEL

(See also Lebanon)

Nov. 8—Party of God guerrillas fire rockets into Israel and Israel's self-declared security zone in Lebanon after Israeli warplanes attack 1 of the Iranian-backed rebels' bases in Lebanon.

Nov. 11—Four Palestinians are killed and an Israeli soldier wounded during 4 separate clashes in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Nov. 16—A grenade tossed into an Arab marketplace in Jerusa-

lem from predominantly Jewish housing kills 1 Palestinian and wounds 11 others.

JAPAN

(See also *France*)

Nov. 5—At a racketeering trial of 2 former executives of the Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin trucking company, prosecutors disclose that in 1979, 7 top Liberal Democratic party officials offered bribes of up to almost \$25 million to the rightist Nippon Kominto opposition group if it would stop verbal attacks on party leader Noboru Takeshita.

JORDAN

Nov. 12—In his traditional grant of amnesty on his birthday, King Hussein orders the release of 140 political and criminal prisoners, including 2 members of parliament who were sentenced to 20-year prison terms by a military court 2 days ago after being convicted of being members of the fundamentalist Muslim Youth for Mobilization and for illegal possession of arms and explosives.

KOREA, SOUTH

Nov. 17—Government officials say South Korea will announce later this week the resumption of \$3 billion in loans and credits granted the Soviet Union in 1990 and suspended in December 1991 because of Russia's failure to meet interest payments; Russia has agreed to pay \$48 million in interest and to guarantee the repayment of loans directed to other former Soviet republics.

LAOS

Nov. 25—State radio reports a special session of parliament today elected hard-line Communist Nouthak Phoumsavan the country's leader after the death of President Kaysone Phomvihane on November 21.

LEBANON

(See also *Israel*)

Nov. 12—Iranian-backed Party of God guerrillas attack UN peacekeeping troops in Siddiqin and Kafra, killing 1 Nepalese soldier and wounding 3 others.

One Party of God guerrilla is killed and 3 Israeli soldiers are wounded in a clash near Rashaf on the edge of Israel's self-declared security zone in southern Lebanon.

LIBERIA

(See also *Intl*, *ECOWAS*, *UN*; *US*)

Nov. 6—*The New York Times* reports rebel leader Prince Johnson has surrendered to troops from the Economic Community of West African States; the 7-nation peacekeeping force has been operating in the country for 2 years.

LITHUANIA

Nov. 16—Nearly complete results from a 2d round of parliamentary elections, held yesterday, show that the Democratic Labor party under Algirdas Brazauskas, made up mostly of former reformist Communists, has won a total of at least 79 of 141 seats in parliament, a working majority; the governing Sajudis coalition under President Vytautas Landsbergis, which took Lithuania out of the Soviet Union in March 1990, won 35 seats.

MEXICO

Nov. 9—The ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) claims victory in yesterday's gubernatorial election in the

state of Tamaulipas; the state's election commission reports that, with 70% of ballots counted, PRI candidate Manuel Cavazos Lerma has won 68% of the vote and Jorge Cárdenas González, representing a coalition of the National Action party (PAN) and the Democratic Revolutionary party, 28%.

Nov. 17—Preliminary results from the November 8 gubernatorial elections show PRI candidate Emilio Goicoechea winning 55% of the vote in the state of Sinaloa; PAN candidate Rafael Nuñez claims his rival won because of electoral fraud; in other gubernatorial races, the PRI garnered nearly 70% of the vote in the state of Puebla, and a winning percentage in Tlaxcala state.

NIGERIA

Nov. 17—President Ibrahim Babangida announces a 3d delay in the transfer of power to a civilian government, from January 2 to August 27, 1993.

PAKISTAN

Nov. 18—Police arrest former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, head of the opposition Pakistan People's party, and other top party leaders and barricade the route of the party's planned protest march from Rawalpindi to the parliament in Islamabad; Bhutto has charged the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif with corruption, repression, and electoral fraud, and called for new elections. Bhutto supporters battle police in the cities of Peshawar and Lahore, where more than a dozen people are injured; thousands are detained nationwide.

PANAMA

Nov. 16—Final results from November 14 balloting on a package of at least 58 constitutional changes—including 1 requiring the dissolution of the army—show 63.5% of the voters rejected them and 31.5% endorsed them; about 5% of the votes were invalidated.

PERU

Nov. 13—The government says it has put down an attempted overnight coup led by 3 retired generals.

Nov. 15—Maoist Shining Path guerrillas kill 5 police officers and 5 civilians in the city of Huacho; the rebels also detonate several bombs in Lima, injuring at least 10 people.

Nov. 20—*The New York Times* reports Shining Path rebels have exploded several bombs in the country in the last 7 days, killing 2 people and wounding 45; it also reports that on October 20, 4 of the top 5 leaders of Socorro Popular, a Shining Path group in charge of military operations in Lima, were captured by police.

Nov. 28—Results from November 22 elections for the Democratic Constituent Congress show candidates from the 2 parties backing President Alberto Fujimori won 38% of the popular vote, giving them a majority in the new 80-seat unicameral body, *The Economist* reports; the country's 2 largest parties, the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance and Popular Action, boycotted the elections because they consider the new assembly illegal; 17 other parties took part.

ROMANIA

Nov. 4—President Ion Iliescu names Nicolae Vacaroiu, a departmental head in the Economy Ministry under the previous government, to the prime ministership.

SOMALIA

(See also *US*; *Yemen*)

Nov. 1—UN officials in Somalia say 3,010 people have died

from starvation in the last 2 weeks.

Nov. 12—A spokesman for the relief group CARE says only 1 of 34 trucks carrying 350 tons relief supplies to the town of Baidoa was able to complete a trip there yesterday; 9 were hijacked and the remainder returned to Mogadishu; 4 people on the trucks were killed.

SOUTH AFRICA

Nov. 3—In 2 incidents on Johannesburg commuter railway lines, attackers kill 7 blacks and wound 2 others.

Nov. 26—President F. W. de Klerk announces a target date of April 1994 for the country's 1st elections in which all races will vote; voters will select a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution and to serve as an interim parliament.

Nov. 30—The Azanian People's Liberation Army, a militant black group, takes responsibility for a November 28 attack in which gunmen killed 4 whites and seriously wounded 17 other people at a golf club in King William's Town.

SRI LANKA

Nov. 16—In Colombo, Navy chief Vice Admiral Clancey Fernando and 3 aides are killed when a suicide bomber rams his explosives-laden motorcycle into the vice admiral's car; officials blame the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam for the killings.

SYRIA

(See Turkey)

TAIWAN

Nov. 19—The semi-official *Central Daily News* and other newspapers report the government's signing of a contract yesterday with 2 French arms makers for 60 Mirage 2000-5 fighter planes and at least 1,000 short- and medium-range missiles; on November 11 the US agreed to allow Taiwan to purchase 150 F-16 jet fighters worth as much as \$5.8 billion.

TURKEY

(See also Iraq)

Nov. 14—After a meeting in Ankara, the foreign ministers of Iran, Syria, and Turkey issue a statement condemning the creation of a Kurdish state in northern Iraq and warning Iraqi Kurdish leaders that their 3 countries will not allow Iraq to be partitioned.

UNITED KINGDOM (UK)

Great Britain

Nov. 9—The government abruptly terminates a month-old criminal trial in a London court of 3 executives of the Matrix Churchill machine-tool company who had been charged with illegally exporting to Iraq equipment for producing conventional weapons; at the trial last week, former Minister of Defense Alan Clark testified the government facilitated the sales for several years before the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Nov. 10—Prime Minister John Major orders an independent judicial inquiry into the sale of arms-production equipment to Iraq.

Nov. 11—The 3 houses of the General Synod of the Church of England vote to allow women to be ordained as priests.

Hong Kong

(See China)

Northern Ireland

Nov. 16—Britain and Ireland acknowledge the breakdown last week of talks with Protestant and Roman Catholic political leaders from Northern Ireland aimed at peacefully resolving the 23-year-old civil war in the province; the talks began in early 1991. On November 14 the Ulster Freedom Fighters, a Protestant group, attacked a shop in a Catholic section of North Belfast, killing 4 people and wounding 14; that night, the Irish Republican Army killed a Royal Ulster Constabulary officer southwest of Belfast.

UNITED STATES (US)

(See also Intl, UN, Yugoslav Crisis; Belgium; CIS; France; Taiwan)

Nov. 5—Final results from the November 3 presidential election show Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton won the presidency with 43% of the popular vote; President George Bush received 38%, and independent candidate Ross Perot captured 19%.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher announces ambassador Edward Brynn is being recalled from Burkina Faso because the government of President Blaise Compaoré is supplying the rebel National Patriotic Front of Liberia with weapons.

Nov. 6—Over 700 Haitian refugees were intercepted and returned to Haiti by the Coast Guard in October, *The New York Times* reports; approximately 40,000 Haitians have fled to the US since President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown in a September 1991 coup.

Nov. 20—Agriculture Secretary Edward Madigan says the EC has agreed to a trade compromise that calls for cuts in Community subsidies for certain agricultural products; on November 5 Bush administration officials said the US would impose a 200% tax on still white wine imported from the EC in retaliation for the EC's refusal to compromise on subsidies.

Nov. 24—Bush announces that US troops will be deployed in Somalia to protect shipments of relief supplies.

The last US marines stationed at the Subic Bay naval base in the Philippines leave; the base was decommissioned on September 30.

Nov. 28—Embassy officials in Cameroon say the US has suspended \$14 million in aid for agricultural and health projects as well as the delivery of military equipment purchased by the country because of human rights violations and irregularities in the October 11 presidential election.

VENEZUELA

Nov. 27—An attempt to overthrow the government of President Carlos Andrés Pérez by a faction within the air force is thwarted by loyalist troops.

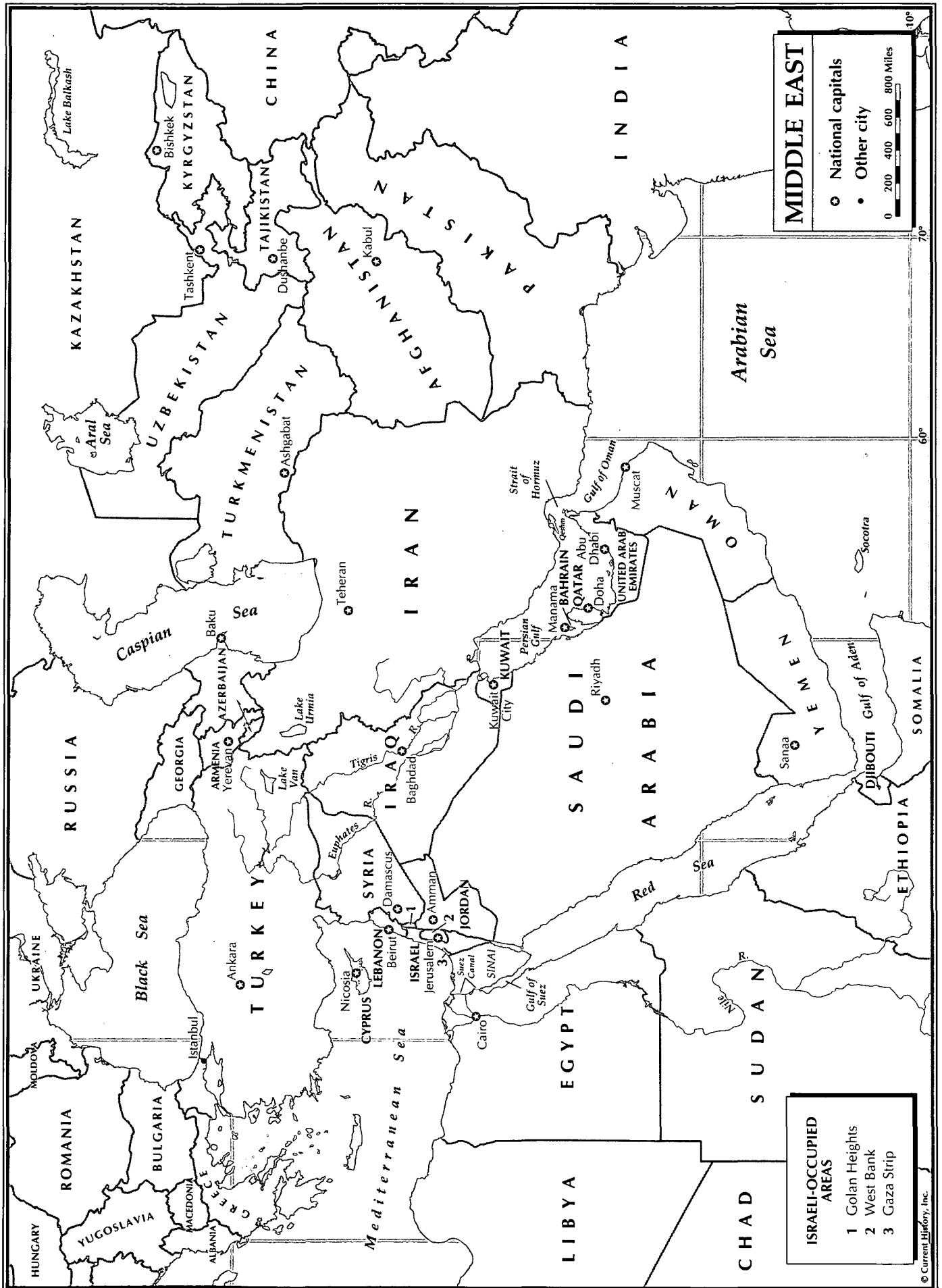
Nov. 28—Minister of Information Angel Zambrano says 5 military officers have been identified as the leaders of the failed coup and that at least 92 officers and civilian conspirators have fled to Peru aboard a military cargo plane.

Nov. 29—Government officials say 230 people have died in the last 3 days in violence related to the coup attempt, including 60 prisoners killed by police during an insurrection in a Caracas prison; 1,200 soldiers—almost 500 of them officers—have been arrested for their roles in the rebellion.

Police arrest 30 members of Bandera Roja (Red Flag), a left-wing group suspected of aiding the plotters.

YEMEN

Nov. 16—A ship carrying 2,500 Somali refugees docks in Mukalla, where refugees receive assistance after traveling for 6 days with little or no food and water; as many as 100 people died in transit. ■



COMING IN FEBRUARY IN CURRENT HISTORY: MEXICO

What new political vistas will greet Mexicans as their single party struggles to remain in power? And what will be in store for President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and the economy as the North American Free Trade Agreement swings into gear? How will Mexico's relationship with the "Colossus to the North" be affected—as well as its relations with other Latin American nations—as Bill Clinton assumes the reins of power? *Topics scheduled to be covered include:*

- **The Shifting Horizons of the Economy**
BY SYDNEY WEINTRAUB, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
- **The State of the Environment**
BY STEVE SANDERSON, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
- **Looking North, Looking South: Mexico's New Foreign Policy**
BY JORGE CHABAT, UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
- **The Price of the Drug War**
BY KATE DOYLE, NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHIVES
- **The Salinas Human Rights Record**
BY ELLEN LUTZ, AMERICAS WATCH
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BY PETER MORICI, UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
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